

The Times-News

GOOD MORNING

Yule lights up our lives



Looking for some spectacular holiday light displays? Find a list and map of some top spots on Magic Valley, page B1.

And read about trends in local Christmas decorations on Family Life, page E1.

O Christmas tree

The fourth and final Christmas in City Park concert of the Advent season will be held at 5 p.m. today in Twin Falls' City Park, featuring music from the Girls Scouts of the Magic Valley, under the direction of Hillari Walker.

WEATHER

Today: Mostly cloudy with a few showers in the morning. Tonight, mostly clear and dry. High of 43, low of 25. Page A2

MONEY

Bread of the future: Industry expects national tortilla sales to hit \$6.1 billion next year. Page D1.

CENTENNIAL

A century ago: Dust control, regulation of rowdies helped make Twin Falls livable for early residents. Page E6

SPORTS

Bear-Cat: Minico takes second. Page C1

OPINION

Roads for trucks: T.F. residents should know the details of a new preferred truck route, today's editorial says. Page A14

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Log on to ... www.magicvalley.com

Dairy: Currents made cows sick

Attorneys say suit against Idaho Power Co. could become landmark case

By Julla Pence
Times-News writer

TWIN FALLS — A lawsuit against Idaho Power Co. by local dairymen couple Mike and Susan Vierstra has the potential to be a landmark case at the national level, their lawyers say.

The Vierstras allege that Idaho Power improperly discharged electrical currents into the ground and onto their dairy south-west of the city near the Twin Falls airport. They claim the currents, called "stray voltage," were so strong as to make their cows sick and reduce milk production over a period of several years.

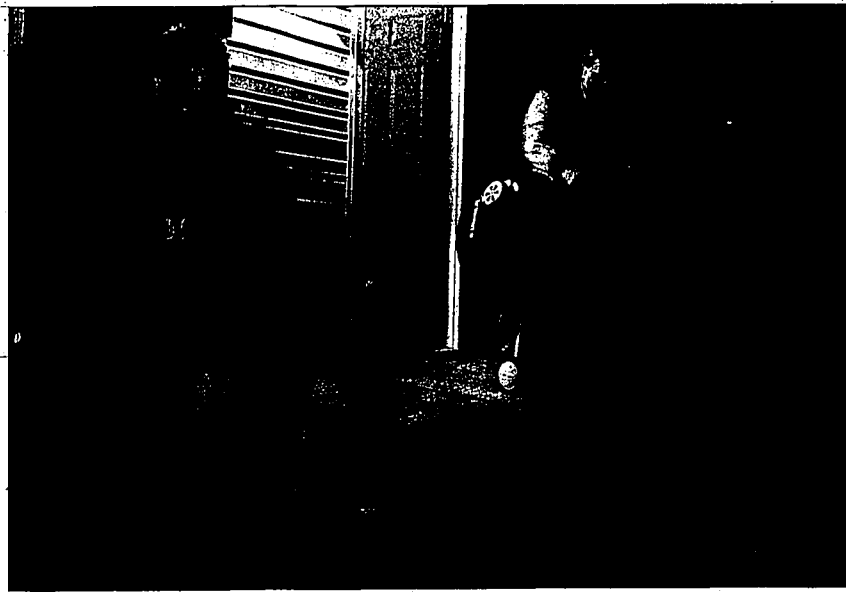
The lawsuit is the subject of what some observers have called one of the most significant civil trials in many years in the 5th Judicial District. The trial is under way in District Court in Twin Falls County, presided over by District Judge Monte Carlson. It began early this month and

might not conclude until February. The concept of stray voltage on farms where animals are raised is not new. It has been implicated as a problem for dairy and livestock herds for about 20 years. Cows, in particular, are said to be most sensitive to low levels of electricity, some studies show. The Vierstras allege that Idaho Power's transmission lines were outdated, which led to poor grounding of currents that streamed unnoticed onto their dairy. "It's a tremendous issue in this country, especially in this state," said Ken Peterson, a Wichita, Kan.-based attorney representing the Vierstras. "The question is whether

the utilities are going to accept responsibility for outdated transmission lines." The Vierstras are accusing Idaho Power of deliberately concealing its policies on stray voltage. Peterson said he hopes the case will establish case law on the subject. On the other hand, Lance Salladay, a Boise attorney representing Idaho Power, said the Vierstras are basing their charges on outdated theories of the 1980s. Some more recent studies show that stray voltage at levels found on the Vierstra dairy is not as dangerous as scientists had thought earlier, Salladay said. He also said that

Please see SUIT, Page A2

SINCE YOU WENT AWAY



ASLEY SMITH/The Times-News

U.S. Army Pfc. Steve Brandsma, a .50-caliber gunner on a HMMWV truck with the 2/2 ACR in Iraq, plays with his 8-year-old springer spaniel Molly, while his parents Steve and Loretta barbecue Wednesday night at their home in Twin Falls. Brandsma is home on leave, but will have to head back to Iraq before Christmas.

Christmas is sweet sorrow if a loved one is in Iraq

Someday soon we all will be together. If the Fates allow. Hang a shining star upon the highest bough. —from "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," by Hugh Martin and Ralph Blane

By Steve Crump
Times-News writer

JEROME — He doesn't have to

look far to see his son. Fact is, Kelly McIntyre sees J.J. every day during this bittersweet, anxious holiday season, just by looking into his 11-month-old grandson's eyes. "Jayden looks just like J.J., and he's able to spend Christmas with us this year," McIntyre said. "That makes it a little easier, but it reminds us all the time that J.J.'s not here." On Christmas Day, Army Pfc.

J.J. McIntyre, 19, will be somewhere in the desert badlands along the border between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, searching for terrorist infiltrators. His folks don't expect to hear from him. "When he goes out on patrol with his unit, he's a long way from a telephone," Kelly said. "Maybe, when he gets back to base..." Maybe go a long way these days for Magic Valley families who have loved ones in Iraq. It's a

different war than everyday Americans have ever experienced. One day your son or daughter sends you an e-mail; the next he or she may be the victim of a rocket-propelled grenade. Or show up on your front doorstep. Distant thunder Things were different — very different. Please see IRAQ, Page A2

Officials: Late-night meetings led to Libya weapons breakthrough

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, meeting in the dead of night in his capital with officers from the Central Intelligence Agency and British intelligence, appeared eager to do away with his weapons programs, U.S. officials said Saturday. Those secret meetings over recent months led to Friday's surprise announcement that Libya would cease work on its programs to develop nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, including an effort to refine uranium for use in nuclear devices, the officials said. The United States and Britain portrayed the announcement as a significant breakthrough in their

efforts to curtail the spread of such weapons and keep them from a terrorist organization or hostile country. It is clear, however, that Gadhafi has tried in recent years to ease tensions with the West, and this step was expected to further improve Libya's international standing. Gadhafi initiated the talks and the subsequent onsite inspections in March after he agreed to settle the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jetliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, with cash payments and an admission of complicity. His overture for talks came days before the United States and Britain invaded Iraq. President Bush said the ouster and capture of Saddam Hussein

and U.S. efforts to check weapons pursuits by North Korea and Iran played a role in Gadhafi's decision. Gadhafi's son said Saturday his father went ahead after receiving assurances that the United States was not plotting against him. Libya also claimed it had acted on its own to serve as an inspiration for the rest of the world. Senior intelligence officials, including one on the inspection team that went to Libya, briefed reporters Saturday on the chain of events that led to the announcement. They spoke on condition they not be identified. Most significant among the discoveries was that Libya had built

Please see LIBYA, Page A2

PROFILE

Libya's leader falls to surprise many

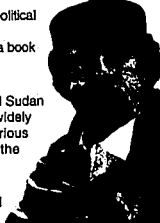
While Libya is credited with moderating its behavior in recent years, Moammar Gadhafi, the country's leader, has been depicted as an erratic, untrustworthy ruler.

Career — Gadhafi seized power at age 27 as an army officer in a 1969 military coup that toppled King Idris, ruler since independence from Italy in 1951.

Political views — He outlined his political philosophy as a mix of socialism, populism and Arab nationalism in a book called "The Green Book."

Terrorism ties — He helped arm revolutionary groups in Egypt and Sudan in the mid-1970s and has been widely accused of aiding terrorists of various nationalities. Libya is blamed for the downing of Pan Am flight 103, in 1988, that killed 270 people.

Gadhafi



SOURCE: Associated Press

7 days, 7 reasons to read

Cracking a smile

Chapped lips are everywhere, but they're easier to prevent than to cure.

Monday

Tiny town

Woman's collection is a big holiday winner.

Tuesday

Dear Abby

Old friend from high school acts juvenile at party.

Wednesday

Horoscope

Birthday today? You're talented and ambitious.

Thursday

Yes!

A College of Southern Idaho faculty member has designed an online course about the '70s rock group Yes!

Friday

L.M. Boyd

'Asu,' meaning 'east' became the name 'Asia.'

Saturday

Barry funny

Stroll back through 2003 with humor columnist Dave Barry.

Sunday

TWIN FALLS FORECAST

Today: Clear; in the morning with a low remaining snow shower or flurries. Lightly cloudy in the afternoon with isolated rain or snow showers. Highs in the 40s.
Tonight: Mostly clear and cool. Lows in the middle 20s.

Tomorrow: Mild, breezy and mostly sunny. Highs in the lower 40s.

BURLEY/RUPERT FORECAST

Today: A low morning snow shower or flurries, otherwise mostly cloudy with isolated afternoon rain or snow showers. Highs in the 40s.
Tonight: Mostly clear and cool. Lows in the lower to middle 20s.

Tomorrow: Mild, breezy and mostly sunny. Highs in the lower 40s.

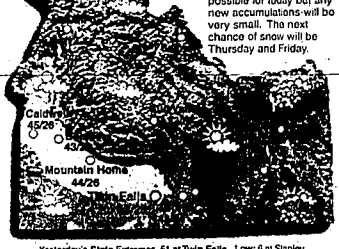
IDAHO'S FORECAST

SUN VALLEY, SURROUNDING MTS.

Scattered snow showers will linger through today with far eastern areas seeing the best chance of additional accumulations. Tomorrow and Tuesday will be clear and partly to mostly sunny.

Today Highs: 24 to 40 and Tonight's Lows: 3 to 13 BOISE
There is a small chance for showers very early today, otherwise conditions will be cool, breezy and partly to mostly cloudy. Conditions will remain mostly dry on Monday and Tuesday.

Today Highs/Lows: 41 to 48 / 29 to 31
NORTHERN UTAH
A touch of light snow is possible for today but any new accumulations will be very small. The next chance of snow will be Thursday and Friday.



Yesterday's State Extremes: 61 at Twin Falls. Low: 6 at Stanley. Weather keys: su, sunny; pc, partly cloudy; cl, mostly cloudy; cldy, mostly cloudy; m, mist; dr, drizzle; r, rain; s, snow; fl, flurries; w, wind; m, missing.

TWIN FALLS FIVE-DAY FORECAST

Table with 5 columns: Today, Tonight, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. Includes weather icons and temperature ranges.

ALMANAC - TWIN FALLS

Table with 2 columns: Temperature and Precipitation. Includes monthly and yearly averages.

Yesterday's Weather

Table with 2 columns: City and High/Low. Lists weather for various Idaho cities.

Temperature, Precipitation, Humidity, Barometric Pressure

Table with 2 columns: Today and Yesterday. Shows current and previous day's data.

Sunrise and Sunset

Table with 2 columns: Today and Yesterday. Shows sunrise and sunset times.

U.V. INDEX

Table with 2 columns: Today and Yesterday. Shows UV index levels.

MOON PHASES

Table with 2 columns: Today and Yesterday. Shows moon phase and moonset times.

MOONRISE AND MOONSET

Table with 2 columns: Today and Yesterday. Shows moonrise and moonset times.

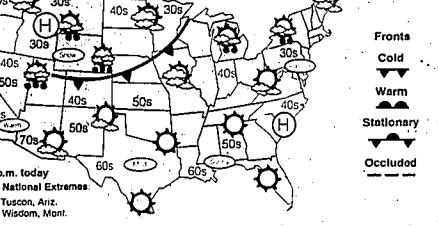
NATIONAL FORECAST

Table with 2 columns: Today and Tomorrow. Shows forecast for major US cities.

WORLD FORECAST

Table with 2 columns: Today and Tomorrow. Shows forecast for various international cities.

TODAY'S NATIONAL MAP



Sutton & Sons Auto Center advertisement with phone number 1-800-672-2225.

Canadian Forecast table with columns for City, Today, and Tomorrow.

Suit

Continued from A1. Confirms to prove their herd problems stemmed from poor management.

"There is no science that supports the accusations the Vjestras are making," Selladay said.

Idaho Power also issued the following statement on Friday: "When this matter was brought to our attention, Idaho Power, as well as several local independent electricians, conducted an investigation of the company's facilities at the issue in the Vjestras claim. They found the company's distribution facilities to be within normal operating standards and that its distribution lines are grounded in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code requirements."

Peterson predicted the case will not go to the jury until possibly the beginning of February. One of the jurors, interestingly, is retired 5th District Judge Daniel Hurlbut.

The Vjestras are not asking for a specific amount of money in their complaint, but rather what is deemed "appropriate" by the court.

More than 100 boxes filled with paperwork to be used as evidence have been stacked around the courtroom in the Theron Ward Judicial Building. There are a lot more that will be added in later, Selladay said.

On Friday, a witness for the Vjestras testified that he used \$150,000 worth of electricity-monitoring equipment to determine that excess current was flowing into an area on the Vjestras dairy where cows and calves were penned.

That witness, electrician Neubauer - a Wisconsin contractor who travels around the nation detecting electrical problems on dairies - said initially the Vjestras hired him to find out what was wrong with the wiring on the farm.

Eventually he said he came to the conclusion the extra voltage was coming from a transformer across the road. He called the Vjestras dairy "an electrical sewer" and a "superhighway of electrical currents" from a non-farm source.

The Vjestras opened their dairy in 1983. In September 2000, Idaho Power changed an aged transformer near the dairy, and afterward the health of the herd immediately began to significantly improve, the Vjestras say.

Nevertheless, they said they had been asking for help from the company before the voltage problems were resolved but were not getting the information they needed in spite of Idaho Power having an active stray voltage problem and protocol in effect.

Classifieds 733-0931

Classifieds section containing Circulation information, Mail information, and Times-News telephone directory.

Libya

Continued from A1. A working centrifuge for uranium enrichment. To make weapons-grade uranium, a raw form of the substance can be passed through a series of centrifuges that slowly create a product capable of nuclear fission.

Such programs need hundreds of centrifuges, called a cascade, to make significant quantities of uranium over a reasonable time. The inspection teams saw only one or a few centrifuges, and the Libyans denied that any enriched uranium had been produced.

Iraq

Continued from A1. ferent - in Vietnam, where soldiers and Marines spent a year in-country and communicated home only by mail and the occasional state-titled phone call. To be sure, there was TV news of the war, but Walter Cronkite didn't tell you whether or not your loved one was safe.

Earlier, during World War II, a son or a husband might as well have been shipped to another planet: Not one American in a million had ever heard of the Solomon Islands or Bastogne. Guys went away in 1942, and if you were lucky, they came home in 1945.

But in Iraq, whenever an American dies or is hurt seriously, CNN tells you all about it immediately - right down to the victim's unit, assignment and details of the attack.

And yet at any time, the Army might give a soldier in a foxhole two weeks' leave and a plane ticket home. Just like that.

The Times-News NEW Information Line 735-3350. Ski, Lottery and Weather Information. Includes a phone call icon.

The intelligence officials refused to say how Libya obtained centrifuge technology. Both Iran and North Korea are thought to have the technology, as are a number of companies and U.S. allies.

Before their meetings with Gadnafi, the American and British intelligence officers were whisked around Tripoli, the capital, by Libyan security officials, sometimes changing cars before arriving at the sites of meetings with Gadnafi.

Gadnafi was described as agreeable, laying out proposals

for disarming and allowing inspections. He provided information about Libyan weapons programs that Western intelligence agencies had been unaware of.

The Libyans had chemical weapons and medium-range missiles from North Korea and, at a minimum, a program to make uranium for nuclear weapons. U.S. intelligence agencies lack information that Libya had enriched the uranium to make a nuclear weapon or possessed biological weapons. For all the Libyan cooperation, officials acknowledged

there still could be undisclosed weapons and programs. So far, the United States has learned that Libya had:

- Tens of tons of mustard agent, a World War I-era chemical weapon, produced about 10 years ago.
• Aircraft bombs capable of dispersing the mustard agent in combat.
• A copy of Scud-C ballistic missiles made in North Korea. The weapons can hit targets 500 miles away.

Send a message

This holiday season, The Times-News is helping Magic Valley residents send greetings to members of the U.S. military. As a free public service, the newspaper offers "Holiday Military Messages." You can send season's greetings to members of the armed forces, and military personnel can send greetings back home.

Division in Fallujah, a combat Iraq town that's the heartland of the anti-American insurgency, wish sometimes they'd stop to think about the kids who are at home.

"That's the hardest part - the fact that the rest of the world goes about its business and doesn't seem to know or care that we have someone you love out there," said Sharon Gentert of Wendell.

"That's something for statistics families of soldiers to cling to, but most are wary of dwelling in the prospect."

Here are some messages from service members already posted on the site: Posted by Juan Vercos - SGT Station: LSA Anconas, Balad, Iraq Message: I want to say hi and merry christmas to my family, The Biberos on Aspen St. in Twin Falls. I like to say hi to my aunt Celia Montes, Lilia Montes, Santa Monica. My uncles Jesse, David and everyone else. I have been in Iraq since March 2003 and am awaiting to come back to the states in April 2004. Yes I did go to Twin Falls High. Love you all.

"He calls when he can," Selladay said. "He's up and down. Sometimes he sounds OK, sometimes he's discouraged."

Send a message to the military. Post your message on the website.

"I don't want the news to all that much," said Sheila Thompson of Twin Falls, whose 20-year-old husband, Michael, is attached to the 101st Airborne Division in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk. "It's real hard."

IDAHOLA LOTTERY advertisement with dates and prize information.

Comfort and joy "I get through this by sending my packages," Andrew Carroll's mom said. "I even sent his first tenant a package because he was kidding my son for getting too many packages from home."

NATION

Analysts find budget outlook gloomy

WASHINGTON (AP) — Keeping the federal budget at or near balance over the next 50 years could require painful tax increases, spending cuts or both, the Congressional Budget Office says.

In a look at the government's long-term budget outlook, Congress' nonpartisan fiscal analyst offered possible combinations of tax and spending changes, all of which would leave lawmakers choosing among politically unpalatable options.

Even so, some still would leave the government in fiscal peril. Yet,

falling to act would drive the accumulated federal debt to unsustainable levels, said the study, released Friday.

"Taken-to-the-extreme, such a path could result in an economic crisis," including the possibilities that foreign investors would pull out, the dollar's value plunge, interest rates and prices soar and stock markets collapse.

"The longer that lawmakers delay acting to counter an unsustainable budgetary situation, the larger the spending cuts or tax increases will eventually have to

be," the 50-page study warned.

The big problem facing the government is the impending retirement of the baby boom generation, whose 76 million members will start later this decade relying on Social Security and Medicare and increase their use of Medicaid.

The budgets for those automatically paid benefits are also growing as medical costs continue to soar.

The three programs provide pensions and medical insurance for the elderly, disabled and poor.

Social Security is so large, and Medicare and Medicaid are expanding so rapidly, that limiting the growth of defense, education and other spending that Congress controls would not be enough for sound budget policy, the report said.

"Substantial reductions in the projected growth of spending or a sizable increase in taxes as a share of the economy — or both — will probably be necessary to provide a significant likelihood of fiscal stability in the coming decades," the report said.

Cracking a smile
Chapped lips are everywhere... but there's easier to prevent them to cure

Monday in Health and Fashion

Tax Attorney Services

- Audit Representation
- Tax Controversies
- Offer In Compromise
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- Innocent-Spouse-Relief
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SPENDING TIME



Lucky Dean, left, a resident at Plum Ridge Care Center in Klamath Falls, Ore., greets as Santa, played by Jeff Mueller, greets her Friday during a Christmas party at the care center.

Air Force drops three counts against translator

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Air Force has dropped three counts in an espionage case against a Syrian-born airman who worked as a translator at the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, prison camp for terrorism suspects.

Dropped was the count in the charge that accused him of "aiding the enemy," a capital offense.

Also dropped were counts dealing with e-mailing information about Guantanamo detainees and committing espionage by transmitting information to unauthorized recipients.

Al-Halabi still faces 17 of the 30 charges filed against him following his arrest in July after nine months as an Arabic translator at the prison.

REWARD \$600

For information leading to the arrest and conviction of person(s) responsible for doing thousands of dollars in damage to masonry equipment and walls at the new Jerome Fire Station on Monday night, December 8th. The person or persons involved will have (2) 4" crick levels and 2 mason bags with misc. hand tools in their possession. Call Lee at 539-0570 or Jerome Police Detective Rubink at 324-4328 or 324-1911

Pilot faces intoxication charges

WASHINGTON (AP) — A veteran Virgin Atlantic Airways pilot was in a Virginia jail Saturday facing a charge that he showed up drunk to fly a plane load of almost 400 passengers to London.

The airline said Richard George Harwell, 55, an American living in England, had a spotless record during 14 years as a Virgin pilot.

"He was suspended with immediate effect pending an internal investigation," said John Riordan, a Virgin Atlantic spokesman.

Police at Washington Dulles International Airport in suburban Virginia seized Harwell on Friday

night after being summoned by the Transportation Security Administration, whose screeners had detected alcohol on Harwell's breath, said Tara Hamilton, spokeswoman for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.

He was interrogated at the airport, arrested and charged under Virginia law with operating an aircraft while under the influence of an intoxicating drug or alcohol and jailed at the Loudoun County Detention Center, Hamilton said.

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Purchase & Return Example
Purchase and return in a 36-month plan
\$100,000 Purchase + 42% Return
(\$42,000) = \$142,000
This meant that \$100,000 + \$142,000 upon maturity

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*See Seller's Prospectus for terms and conditions. All purchase fees are 2% product. The APR is 6.99% if made by

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Shown exclusively on

Sunday, December 21 • 9:30 am & 5:30 pm
Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24 • 11:00 am & 10:36 pm (After the News)
Christmas, Thursday, December 25 • 10:00 am & 2:00 pm

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NATION



Nicole Staten, 3, right, of Pontotoc Miss., is held by her father, Anthony, as they wait in line Tuesday outside the Lee County Health Department, in Tupelo, Miss., for flu shots. The department ran out after only being open a couple of hours.

New flu strain could overwhelm country

ATLANTA (AP) - Some U.S. hospitals are already struggling to deal with the current flu outbreak. But that is nothing compared to what would happen if a powerful new flu strain exploded into a worldwide flu outbreak, known as a pandemic.

Patients would overwhelm hospitals, and the overflow would have to be housed elsewhere, such as schools - which would already be closed. Nurses, already in short supply, could not possibly get to everyone. And there would be even fewer doctors and nurses once they, too, started getting sick.

"Pandemic flu is a special challenge ... it has a much greater potential for the disruption of the function of society," said Dr. Jeffrey Duchin. As chief of communicable disease control, epidemiology and immunization for Seattle-King County's public health department in Washington state, Duchin is one of the many health officials wrestling with the challenge.

"It's arguably the most significant biological disaster that could ever afflict a community," he said.

Many public health officials say the country needs to do much more to ready itself for such a disaster, and U.S. Health and Human

Services Secretary Tommy Thompson said last week that work is under way on a national preparedness plan.

HHS expects \$50 million from Congress for pandemic flu planning, including research into ways of speeding up vaccine manufacturing. The department will ask for \$100 million more next year.

A pandemic can happen if different flu strains swap genetic information and mutate into a new swain that people's bodies have no immunity against and that is easily spread from person to person.

The last pandemics were the Hong Kong flu in the late 1960s, when 34,000 died in the United States, and the Asian flu of 1957-58 that killed 70,000 in this country.

"The world will be in deep trouble if the impending influenza pandemic strikes this week, this month or even this year," wrote Drs. Robert Webster and Richard Webby of the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital infectious disease department, in an article last month in the journal Science.

"The time for talking is truly over. We must be prepared."

Family, friends gather to support Michael Jackson

LOS OLIVOS, Calif. (AP) - Friends and relatives of Michael Jackson descended on his Neverland Ranch on Saturday to show their support for the entertainer, who is fighting child molestation charges.

The private gathering behind the gates of the sprawling estate was described as a homecoming for Jackson, who has kept a low profile in Las Vegas and undisclosed locations since surrendering to authorities on Nov. 20 and being released on \$3 million bail.

Nearly 50 cars entered the ranch's main gate, and uninvited supporters staking out the

entrance ran up to one black Mercedes carrying two people who appeared to be Jackson's parents.

One sign pasted on a fan's car read: "Michael is innocent! Leave him alone!"

One of the invited guests was fan Sheree Wilkins, who said she was contacted Thursday by an assistant to Katherine Jackson, the pop star's mother.

"That's Michael's style. When he wants to say thanks, he does it big and invites the people who care about him," said Wilkins, 32, of Inglewood, who said she has visited the Neverland compound several times before.

Business owner gives workers bonus

ADEL, Iowa (AP) - Christmas came early for 270 employees at an Iowa corn company.

Harry Stine, founder of Stine Seed Co., told his workers they would get \$1,000 for each year they have worked for him. That adds up to a \$20,000 bonus for some loyal employees who have worked there for 20 years.

The workers sat in stunned silence after he announced the bonuses following the company's post-harvest luncheon last month.

"He said that we're a can-do kind of people, that we work in the rain and the mud, and that he just appreciated our hard work," said seven-year employee Kelley Muir.

"All of these people help me every day," Stine said. "So it's not a be-nice thing. It's just what should be done."

The average bonus check was \$4,000.

NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION

LEE GREENWOOD

December 30 & 31

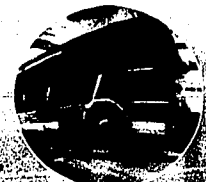
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NATION/WORLD

Probe ties Iran's nuke program to Pakistan

The Washington Post

VIENNA — Evidence discovered in a probe of Iran's secret nuclear program—points—overwhelmingly to Pakistan as the source of crucial technology that put Iran on a fast track toward becoming a nuclear weapons power, according to U.S. and European officials familiar with the investigation. The discoveries prompted a decision by Pakistan two weeks ago to detain three of its top nuclear scientists for several days of questioning with U.S. intelligence experts. U.S. intelligence officials said, however, that the scientists haven't been charged with any crime, and Pakistan continues to

insist that it never wittingly provided nuclear assistance to Iran or anyone else. Documents provided by Iran to U.N. nuclear inspectors since early November have exposed the outlines of a vast, secret procurement network that successfully acquired thousands of sensitive parts and tools from numerous countries over a 17-year period. While Iran has not directly identified Pakistan as a supplier, Pakistani individuals and companies are strongly implicated as sources of key blueprints, technical guidance and equipment for a pilot uranium-enrichment plant that was exposed by Iranian disclosures 18 months ago, government

officials and independent weapons experts said. While American presidents since Ronald Reagan worried that Iran might seek nuclear weapons, U.S. and allied intelligence agencies were unable to halt Iran's most significant nuclear acquisitions, or even to spot a major nuclear facility under construction until it was essentially completed. Although the alleged transfers occurred years ago, suggestions of Pakistani aid to Iran's nuclear program have further complicated the relationship between the United States and Pakistan, a key ally in the war against terrorism. In documents and interviews

with investigators of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iranian officials have offered detailed accounts of how they obtained sensitive equipment from European, Asian and North American companies. Much of the equipment was routed through a transshipment hub in the Persian Gulf port city of Dubai to conceal the actual destination, according to officials familiar with Iran's disclosures.

U.S. troops employ police sleuthing against rebels

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — U.S. troops battling the shadowy guerrilla insurgency in Iraq have adopted the computer-sleuthing tactics of big-city American police departments—to prepare strikes against rebel fighters and their sources of money and weapons. Military intelligence analysts have adopted databases and software used by civilian law enforcers to catalog names, pictures and suspects' fingerprints and to search such for links among guerrilla suspects, said Lt. Col. Ken Devan, the top intelligence officer for the U.S. Army's 1st Armored Division. Like the police, the military uses the software to predict the locations and timing of attacks. The idea, Devan said on Saturday, is to focus the division's raids on insurgents without sweeping up too many innocent people and risk turning more Iraqis against the U.S. military. "Early on we may have been a blunt instrument. Now it's all about precision," Devan said in an interview with The Associated Press at division headquarters at Baghdad International Airport. "We try to be very precise in what we do. You don't want to turn someone who may have been supportive of the coalition." Baghdad has about 200-500 hardcore insurgents, along with hundreds more part-time rebels who work for pay, Devan said. Across Iraq, military estimates have placed the number of die-

hard guerrillas at 5,000. The 1st Armored Division has identified 14 cells operating in and around the city, one of which has already been dismantled, division commanders have said. Devan and the division's intelligence analysts study clusters of attacks in Baghdad neighborhoods, looking for the time of day and days of the week when strikes are most likely. They then alter their convoy schedules and routes to avoid ambushes or send patrols to confront the guerrillas, Devan said. The division uses three programs in tandem, entering data on every bomb blast, every fire-fight, every suspect detained and every tip given by a local resident. Digital fingerprints are taken from every arrested suspect and added to the database. "We're seeing patterns emerge. There are certain neighborhoods you don't want to be out in, or there's a better likelihood you'll be attacked," Devan said. "You try to predict what the enemy's going to do next. We try to cut him off at the knees." The software allows the military to plot on a Baghdad street map, for instance, the locations of roadside bomb blasts that occurred between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. in a given month. Commanders then tailor raids to catch the bombers by watching the neighborhood and rounding up suspects until they find a weapons cache, Devan said.

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WORLD

Investigators trace Iraqi assets to Syria, Lebanon, Jordan

The Washington Post

U.S. authorities have identified more than \$1 billion in Iraqi assets in banks in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan and are pursuing hundreds of leads in the United States concerning possible illicit financial transactions with the former Iraqi government.

Treasury, Internal Revenue Service and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials have spent nine months poring over financial records recovered from the vault of the Central Bank of Iraq, including records they say show how Saddam Hussein's government diverted at least \$1.8 billion from the United Nations' humanitarian oil-for-food program and moved some of that money to foreign banks or used it to buy weapons components.

Officials are pressing the hunt for many billions more Saddam is believed to have moved out of Iraq, worried that those funds are going to terrorist groups or are financing Saddam loyalists' attacks on U.S. troops. "There was a staggering amount of plunder as a result of the oil-for-food program and other schemes," said the Treasury Department's recently departed general counsel, David Authausner, who until this month helped direct the search. "While some was spent on ostentatious palaces, most is unaccounted for."

Investigators said they have identified \$3.3 billion Saddam generated since June 2000 in violation of U.N. sanctions.

ICE agents who set up shop in

the vault of the largely demolished central bank found records showing the diversion and movement of funds, agency officials said. Iraqi officials, they said, did not bother to disguise illicit money transfers or weapons purchases. "They weren't worried about covering up with front companies," one ICE official said.

The result is that investigators have launched about 40 probes of U.S. entities or individuals sus-

pected of exporting weapons components or dual-use technology, as U.S. News reported Thursday, in violation of export laws and U.N. sanctions.

In the first criminal case to result, two U.S. men were charged in October with brokering the manufacture of six armored patrol boats for the Iraqi military - a transaction detailed in a contract ICE agents recovered at the central bank.

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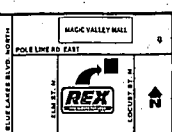
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Spanish leader visits Iraq; U.S. will send more troops

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — Reaffirming his support for the U.S.-led occupation, Spain's prime minister lunched in a desert canteen with Spanish soldiers in Iraq on Saturday in a surprise trip reminiscent of President Bush's Thanksgiving visit to Baghdad.

Also Saturday, in an apparent revenge campaign, attackers separately killed two people with close ties to the former regime of Saddam Hussein.

In Samarra, a town near Tikrit where rebel activity has been intense, U.S. forces destroyed a house suspected of being used by insurgents to shoot at passing military convoys. And residents in the western town of Rawah, near the Syrian border, said a large number of American soldiers had entered the town and were conducting house-to-house searches.

Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar landed in Iraq at about 11 a.m. with a 16-member delegation to meet members of the

1,300-strong Spanish contingent in Iraq, based in the southern town of Diwaniyah. He left four hours later.

The trip was so secret that soldiers in the mess didn't know Aznar was there until his visit was announced over a megaphone and the prime minister walked in. Bush staged a similar trip, secretly flying to spend a few hours with troops at Baghdad International Airport.

In brief comments to reporters, Aznar expressed support for Spanish troops and said he brought them greetings from King Juan Carlos. He said the soldiers were working for "the cause of freedom, democracy and respect for international law."

He depicted the soldiers' mission as being part of a broad, global campaign against terrorism. "The safety of Spain is also defended in Iraq," he said.

Aznar has supported the United States despite widespread opposition at home. Ten Spaniards have died in Iraq since

August, and the worst attack — an ambush in late November — left seven Spanish intelligence agents dead.

Meanwhile, senior military officials in Washington said the Pentagon is sending an additional 2,000 troops to Iraq and extending the deployment of another unit.

Japan also said it was dispatching 1,000 troops on a humanitarian mission to southern Iraq — the country's first deployment to a conflict zone since World War II.

There were conflicting reports about a shooting in northeast Iraq. Local police said U.S. forces believed Iraqi policemen manning a checkpoint were bandits and mistakenly fired on them, killing three officers and wounding two.

The policemen were on a road in the Sleiman Beg area, 55 miles south of Kirkuk, when U.S. troops opened fire at midnight Friday, said Lt. Salam Zangana of the Kirkuk police force. He said two other policemen were wounded.

New U.S. commander plans changes

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — In a significant switch in strategy, U.S. troops plan to set up bases to provide reconstruction aid in provinces "plagued" by Taliban attacks, the new U.S. commander in Afghanistan said Saturday in his first interview since taking charge.

Lt. Gen. David Barno told The Associated Press that the move will make the troubled south and east safer for aid workers and open the way for landmark Afghan elections next summer. He also predicted a sharp reaction from insurgents.

They're "going to realize that the death knell to terrorist organizations in that part of the country," said Barno. "We'll be prepared for that."

A wave of violence this year has belied U.S. claims to have brought security to Afghanistan, two years after an American-led assault drove the Taliban from power for harboring al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden.

Nations and other groups to withdraw from some regions, undermining aid delivery and confidence in the reconstruction efforts of the U.S.-backed government ahead of elections slated for June.

The United Nations has even accused the U.S. military of playing into the hands of Taliban agitators in its hunt for terror suspects, with two botched raids that killed 15 Afghan children earlier this month.

In a bid to deliver more aid to impoverished civilians, the United States and allies including Britain and New Zealand have set up nine joint civilian-military units

charged with creating islands of stability across the country.

Most of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams are in relatively secure regions. Now, the U.S. military is deploying teams across a broad swath of the country dominated by Pashtuns, Afghanistan's largest ethnic group from which the headline Islamic Taliban draw their main support.

Barno, who took command of the 11,000-strong U.S. force here on Nov. 27, said there will be at least 12 such reconstruction teams by March and more later, including dangerous missions in the capitals of Zabol and Uruzgan provinces that were shunned by aid groups because Taliban militants reportedly roam freely.

"We are looking at a significant alteration of our strategy in the south and east," Barno said at his office in the fortified U.S. Embassy compound in Kabul.



David Barno

Family receives gifts days after sergeant dies

CARLISLE, Pa. (AP) — In the days since Staff Sgt. Kimberly A. Voelz died in the arms of her soldier husband in Iraq, mementoes from her life have been arriving almost daily at her parents' home.

First, an e-mail she wrote a day before she died reached her parents' inbox. Then her green military uniform arrived, bearing the ribbons of the Purple Heart and Bronze Star with Valor medals.

On Friday, her Christmas present to her brother and sister-in-law came in the mail. The set of six inscribed holiday ornaments bear comforting messages that now seem almost eerie: "Throughout the storm you do not walk alone."

"She died and she's a hero, how great is that?" said her mother, Carol A. Fahnestock. "I know she's in heaven. She's not lost to us. She's just in a different place."

Voelz, 27, died Dec. 14 after being called to deal with a makeshift bomb on a roadside telephone pole near the town of al-Haswah, 25 miles south of Baghdad.

Exactly what happened is unclear, but there are reports that surgeons had to amputate her left leg, and she suffered a severe chest injury. Doctors had hoped to transport her to a hospital in Germany, but her condition worsened and she died in her husband's arms at a military hospital in Baghdad.

Voelz and her husband, Staff Sgt. Max Voelz, 29, both explosives disposal specialists based out of Fort Knox, Ky., met during explosives training in 1997 and married two years later.

She rose through the ranks and seemed to enjoy work that brought her to the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, to St. Louis for a visit by Pope John Paul II in 1999, and on support detail with the Secret Service.

"She was smart, tough, and we got along good," Max Voelz said.

They both arrived in Iraq in late September, stationed at separate camps but able to stay in close contact.

Max Voelz called his wife's parents with the news of the death, telling them she had been the best thing that had ever hap-



Carol Fahnestock, the mother of Army Staff Sgt. Kimberly A. Voelz, reacts while talking about her daughter, Friday, in Carlisle, Pa. Voelz died in her husband's arms Dec. 14 after a makeshift bomb site was preparing to disarm exploded.

pened to him.

"That was our godsend, that he was there," said her father, Floyd A. Fahnestock Jr.

Max Voelz escorted his wife's remains from Iraq, arriving Wednesday at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware.

The funeral, with military honors, will be held Monday. Her mother plans to give a eulogy.

"I really want to talk, because I want to tell everyone how great she was," she said.

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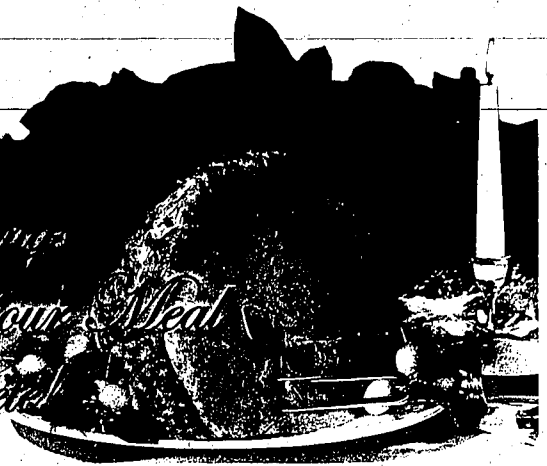
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NATION

Agencies lack tools to track problem nurses

Man suspected of killing patients kept his license

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - A nurse suspected of killing patients in two states was able to keep his license, even after he was fired from several jobs, because hospitals, prosecutors and state regulators didn't share information.

Charles Cullen told authorities this month that he gave lethal injections to 30 to 40 critically ill patients during his 16-year career in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. His public defender, Johnnie Mask, has since said Cullen - charged with one count of murder and one count of attempted murder in New Jersey - would not cooperate unless prosecutors guaranteed they would not seek the death penalty. Prosecutors haven't said what punishment they intend to seek.

Cullen, who told authorities he gave the fatal overdoses of heart medication to put seriously ill patients out of their misery, had a history of work troubles. He had been fired from two of the four New Jersey hospitals

where he worked before moving to Pennsylvania in the late 1990s. At a third, he was one of several nurses questioned in the suspicious death of a 91-year-old patient.

In Pennsylvania, Cullen was fired from a nursing home for allegedly medicating patients at unscheduled times. A co-worker accused him in a lawsuit of giving a patient a dangerous, un-prescribed shot of insulin. One Pennsylvania hospital suspected him amid suspicions that he had hidden potentially lethal heart medications. Prosecutors investigated suspicions that he improperly drugged patients, but could not link him to any deaths. But because Pennsylvania health care facilities and law enforcement agencies are not required to alert licensing officials of suspected misconduct, only St. Luke's Hospital in Bethlehem ever filed a complaint about Cullen with the state nursing board, officials said.

Without official complaints, generally no action will be taken against a nurse's license, said Department of State spokesman Brian McDonald.

"The nursing board can't actually go out and police the actions of every single nurse in the Commonwealth," he said. "There are just too many."

The state's Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs has about 45 inspectors to investigate allegations of licensed individuals, and they cover many areas in addition to nursing.

Dean appeals to Democrats for halt to attack politics

MAQUOKETA, Iowa (AP) - Howard Dean appealed to fellow Democratic presidential candidates Saturday to stop the bitter attack politics that have come to dominate the race for the party's nomination. The race needs "a little character transplant," he said. "It's not necessary to tear down the other opponents," said Dean, whose front-running campaign has come increasingly under fire from Democratic rivals.

In his latest swing through Iowa, where the nominating process starts with caucuses next month, Dean pushed hard at his claim to being an outsider running against Washington-based candidates with no record of accomplishment. "There are five or six people running for president right now who have a chance at winning," Dean said. "I'm the only person who has done anything about trying to get health care."

Dean is bunched with Missouri Rep. Dick Gephardt in Iowa, but he has developed a wide lead in other early states such as New



Howard Dean

Hampshire. As his campaign has developed momentum, he's come under fire with regularity.

"This campaign needs a little character transplant," Dean said. "You shouldn't believe what

other people say." Dean argues that his Internet-based campaign is broadening the Democratic Party and offers the most realistic chance of ousting President Bush. He urged backers to commit not only to supporting him but also to changing the party.

"It has to be about rebuilding the Democratic party," said Dean. Dean argued that his 12 years as governor of Vermont give him experience unmatched by his rivals and a record that draws the sharpest contrast with President Bush.

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IDAHO

Idaho will get new LDS temple

REXBURG (AP) — Just two years after the Mormon church opened a Brigham Young University campus here, church leaders have told local stakeholders that a temple will soon follow. "This is a wonderful day for our entire community," said Greg Moeller, president of the church's Rexburg East Stake. "The announcement validates the sacred efforts of so many, both living and dead, who have strived to build the kingdom here. It also gives each of us a reason to strive harder to be worthy of this great blessing," he said. Brad Egbert, bishop of the Salem First Ward in Rexburg, said local church officials received a letter from Gordon B. Hinckley, president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and other leaders saying they were "pleased to announce a temple

will be constructed in Rexburg, Idaho." The revelation has surprised the city of more than 17,000 people. No dates for construction or completion have been announced. "It came as a shock to me personally," said Mayor-elect Shawn Larsen, who is set to take office in January. There was no pre-notice of the announcement, Moeller said Friday. "There have been rumors, probably floating around for 10 years, but nobody took them very seriously until today." The temple will be just one of three in Idaho. The other two are in Boise and Idaho Falls, which is 30 miles south of Rexburg. There are 128 existing temples or ones slated for construction worldwide, the church says. Donna Benfield, executive director of the Rexburg Chamber

of Commerce and city council member, believes the temple will be a boon to the tourist trade. "Temples are great draws," she said. "I can't see anything but positive coming from a temple being built here." Ricks College, formerly a two-year institution with an enrollment of nearly 9,000 students, became BYU-Idaho two years ago. More than 11,100 students enrolled this fall, university spokesman Don Sparhawk said. The growth at BYU-Idaho has brought into the Rexburg area probably has played a factor, Moeller said. "I don't know if that's the exclusive reason for the temple, but I'm certain it has played a role," he said. "With the university's growth in student body, we've had a lot of growth throughout the community."

Police label girl's death a homicide

NAMPA (AP) — Police are calling the death of a 16-year-old girl at a downtown motel a homicide. But police Chief Curtis Homer would not disclose how Sandra Rico Ramirez, a sophomore at Skyview High School, died early Friday morning. "It wasn't like a real violent thing that went on in there," Homer said. "But still, we have a 16-year-old that's dead and we have unexplained reasons and some evidence that points toward suspicious circumstances." An autopsy likely will be performed Monday, Homer said. He said the last time the girl's family saw her was Thursday. Late that night, they received a call from someone who said Ramirez may be in trouble at a local motel. Family members started going from motel to motel until they found Ramirez at the scene in a room. She died at the unconscious. Homer said they want to talk to Esquivel Ramirez Soriano, 28, who may possibly have information about what happened at the motel.

Homeless woman who died in sauna had brain tumor

BOISE (AP) — A woman who died in a sauna in the Downtown Family YMCA has been identified as 40-year-old Elaine Rose Warren. She went to the YMCA Thursday night to escape the cold air. An autopsy revealed the homeless woman had a sizable brain tumor, Ada County Coroner Erwin Sonnenberg said. Warren either died from an ailment related to the tumor or from hyperthermia from being inside the sauna too long, Sonnenberg said. Investigators believe the tumor was undiagnosed. Warren likely spent several hours inside the sauna after walking into the facility and telling staff she was cold. "A staff member gave Warren a blanket and told her to sit in the lobby to warm up, Treasure Valley YMCA Chief Executive Officer, Jim Everett. It is not clear how or when Warren left the lobby, but she walked through the building and entered the sauna, he said. A night crew found Warren fully

Homeless people are frequently allowed inside the building to seek shelter from the cold and sometimes to shower.

clothed inside the women's sauna early Friday. She apparently died a couple hours earlier. Homeless people are frequently allowed inside the building to seek shelter from the cold and sometimes to shower, Everett said. Warren was held in the Canyon County Jail from Tuesday until police said. On Wednesday, she took a cab from Nampa to Boise, where she told the driver she was unable to pay the fare. The driver called police, and Warren told the officers she was homeless. She was not cited.

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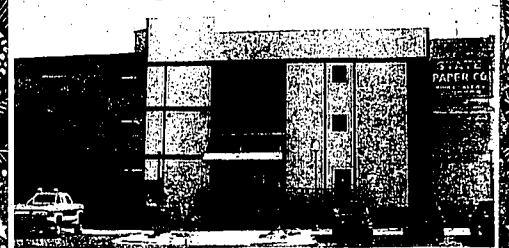


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WORLD

Annual death toll drops in Mideast

JERUSALEM - The third year of fighting between Israelis and Palestinians saw a decline in the number of people killed, according to an Associated Press count. But violence still claimed nearly 800 lives in 2003, and children and teens remained among the most vulnerable.

Palestinians said a drop in attacks by both sides is because of hopes over the past year for an end to the violence, while Israeli analysts cited the construction of a massive fence complex in the West Bank and other security measures that have severely disrupted Palestinian daily life.

Altogether, 2,583 people have died on the Palestinian side and 898 on the Israeli side from the fighting that began Sept. 28, 2000. The figures are based on AP reporting, including interviews with doctors, relatives and witnesses, visits to hospitals and statements from security forces.

The second year of the conflict, from October 2001 to September 2002, saw an unprecedented wave of Palestinian suicide bombings and Israeli military sweeps that climaxed in the spring of 2002.

During those 12 months, 1,145 people were killed on the Palestinian side and 446 on the Israeli side. In the third year, from October 2002 to September 2003, the number of deaths fell to 658 on the Palestinian side and 241 on the Israeli side. Those figures were roughly in line with the casualties of the first year.

A similar drop is seen by comparing calendar years, January through December.

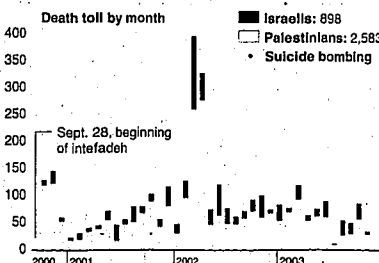
In 2002, 1,131 people were killed on the Palestinian side and 451 on the Israeli side; as of Friday, with less than two weeks left in 2003, the year has seen 571 deaths on the Palestinian side and 207 on the Israeli side - just under half in previous year's number in both cases. Eleven Americans were killed during that period.

Much of the decline has occurred over the last six-month period, which began with a cease-fire by Palestinian militant groups that lasted a little over a month before collapsing amid renewed fighting. Now, Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia and Egyptian mediators are trying to persuade militants to again halt attacks on Israelis. The last big suicide bombing was more than two months ago and a relative lull in major violence has held since.

The number of Israeli soldiers killed also dropped by almost half, from 124 in the second 12-month period of the uprising to 65 in the third, reflecting fewer major Israeli military offensives. Suicide bombings triggered two big Israeli sweeps in April and June 2002 and the reoccupation of most of the West Bank cities that had become autonomous in the 1990s peace process.

Data kept by think tanks and

Three years of Israeli-Palestinian violence has resulted in 2,583 Palestinians and 898 Israelis dead. The decline in deaths in 2003 was due mainly to fewer Palestinian attacks and Israeli military strikes, according to an Associated Press count.



NOTE: Data as of Dec. 19, 2003
 SOURCE: Associated Press
 Killed 65
 Killed 146
 Killed 21

government bodies on both sides show a similar downward trend - although there are slight discrepancies in the numbers because of different counting criteria. Palestinian groups have counted people who have died of natural causes aggravated by the presence of the Israeli army and deaths whose causes were unclear.

Hillel Frisch, a senior Israeli researcher at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies at Bar-Ilan University, said the barrier Israel is building to cut itself off from parts of the West Bank has contributed. Experts also note that almost no suicide bombers have come from Gaza, which is completely surrounded by a security fence.

Also, pre-emptive arrests have increased significantly and about 80 percent of suicide bombers and their handlers are caught, Frisch said, citing what he has learned from the military.

Palestinian analysts say a unilateral cease-fire observed by Palestinian militants for several weeks in a summer of heightened peace hopes contributed to the

drop in Israeli casualties.

"I don't think the uprising is waning, but we see a drop in (attacks) because people think something can happen" on the diplomatic front, said Ali Jerbawi, a political science professor at the West Bank's Bir Zeit University.

"When hope dies, you'll see a resumption in actions."

Peace efforts have stalled in recent months and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said Thursday that if an agreement was not reached soon, Israel would take steps to cut itself off from the Palestinians, drawing its own boundary between the two peoples that would leave the Palestinians with less land than they want.

An Oct. 4 suicide bombing at a restaurant in the port city of Haifa that killed 21 people marked the last major terror attack inside Israel. That attack killed four Israeli Arabs as well - victims who in the AP count go on the Israeli side.

But a steady grind of violence continues.

The two sides disagree sharply over who among the dead were

combatants and which were civilians.

Palestinians say the vast majority of their dead were bystanders, while Israelis insist they totaled fewer than half. Independent verification is often difficult.

Dr. Jihad Mashal, the Palestinian director of a group of West Bank medical clinics, said blames fighting in densely populated areas. "If you talk about targeted assassinations, yes, many of the killed are accused and wanted by Israel," Mashal said. "But when you kill one (militant), you kill 10 (bystanders) around him."

Among the Palestinian dead, 60 people were killed by fellow Palestinians who accused them of being informers and funneling information to the Israeli intelligence agents.

There is little dispute that most of the Israelis killed in shootings and bombings were civilians, but categories are still blurred. One disputed category is off-duty Israeli soldiers; another is Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza - civilians to Israelis, combatants and legitimate targets to many Palestinians.

Minors continue to rank high among the casualties.

According to the AP count, at least 319 Palestinians under age 18 have been killed - about a quarter in the third year of violence.

The Palestine Monitor, a think tank that tracks the violence, says 508 under-18s were killed - 24 of them affiliated with militant groups.

The AP's count of minors killed does not include those who perpetrated Palestinian attacks, such as the youngest suicide bomber, who had just turned 16. At least 92 Israeli children and teens have died, most of them in suicide bombings. One explanation is that youngsters are more dependent on buses, a frequent bomb target.

Most of the Palestinian minors were killed in clashes with soldiers. Youngsters routinely throw stones at troops, and some have climbed atop tanks and armored vehicles.

Soldiers fire tear gas and rubber bullets but also live rounds to disperse crowds. Israel says that Palestinians have sent children into the front lines in a cynical attempt to win sympathy. Palestinians and human rights groups say soldiers are often hasty in opening fire.

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WORLD

Russia's romance with West falters over wars

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia's romance with the West appears to be in trouble over its renewed assertiveness toward former Soviet republics and what many view as the Kremlin's growing authoritarian streak.

Europe and the United States are taking the Kremlin to task, saying Russia is backsliding on democracy. Russia says the West is condescending and hypocritical, and the backlash is felt in the victory of anti-Westerners in the Dec. 7 parliamentary election.

"It's obvious that relations are worsening," said Boris Nemtsov, a leader of the Union of Right Forces.



Russian President Vladimir Putin listens to a question during his interview with the U.S. media at his residence in Novo-Ogaryovo outside Moscow Sept. 20. Europe and the United States are saying Russia is backsliding on democracy.

This Western-oriented, liberal party failed to get into the State Duma, or lower house, in the election, which European observers described as unfair and a setback to democracy.

After the Sept. 11 attacks, Russia rode a wave of Western admiration for President Vladimir Putin's steadfast support of the U.S. war on terror, but now Moscow finds itself on the defensive.

It was the odd man out at a conference of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe earlier this month, when it refused to sign a final document in which it was criticized for failing to fulfill its 1999 pledge to withdraw troops from the ex-Soviet republics of Georgia and Moldova.

Earlier, the European Union turned a cold shoulder to Putin's push for mutual, visa-free travel, and to Moscow's concerns that the expanding bloc is getting closer to Russia's frontiers. It also has set tough terms for Russia's joining the World Trade Organization.

"The West hasn't made even tactical concessions to Russia to secure good strategic relations for the years ahead."

— Alexei Arbatov, a liberal former lawmaker

Britain, Denmark and Greece have all rebuffed Russia's attempts to extradite citizens it accuses of grave crimes — the exiled tycoons Boris Berezovsky and Vladimir Gusinsky, and Akhmed Zakayev, the envoy of Chechen rebel leader Aslan Maskhadov.

"The West hasn't made even tactical concessions to Russia to secure good strategic relations for the years ahead," said Alexei Arbatov, a liberal former lawmaker whose Yabloko party also failed to get elected. "Western policy toward Russia has helped strengthen anti-Western, nationalist sentiments."

The most obvious result is the strong showing in Parliament of the nationalist Homeland bloc. The movement, created with Kremlin encouragement to splinter the Communist vote, campaigned on slogans of cracking down on big business, countering Western expansionism and protecting ethnic Russians abroad.

"There are no pro-Western forces in the new State Duma — they are either radically or moderately anti-Western," Arbatov said. "It will put pressure on the president ... pushing him in that direction."

Some fear that without positive feedback from the West, Putin might reverse his course of befriending the West and launch aggressive attempts to wrest ex-

Soviet republics out of the Western orbit. Optimists hope the president will refrain from open confrontation, but even they don't expect the Kremlin to bow to Western pressure.

"After striving for integration into the West, Russia may now turn to forming its own zone of influence on former Soviet territory," said Dmitry Trenin of the Carnegie Endowment's Moscow office.

Putin bolstered relations with the United States by welcoming the U.S. military deployment in former Soviet republics in Central Asia for the war in Afghanistan. However, Russian officials have become increasingly impatient, urging Washington to set a deadline for getting out of the strategically located, energy-rich region.

To counter growing U.S. clout in Central Asia, Russia in October opened an air base in the Central Asian nation of Kyrgyzstan — its first new military outpost abroad since the 1991 Soviet collapse.

A senior U.S. diplomat, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity, said Washington hadn't yet done any rethinking of its relations with Moscow, adding that many of the Kremlin's moves appeared to have been guided by electoral motives.

Nemtsov said Putin apparently expects that Russia's role in settling global crises will shield him from U.S. criticism.

"The Kremlin hopes that the fight against terrorism will overshadow all other problems," Nemtsov said.

When ties were warming, the West tempered its criticism of Russia's war in Chechnya and issued only muted rebukes when Russia's independent TV stations were forced off the air. But U.S.-Russian relations were badly hurt by Moscow's opposition to the war in Iraq.

Pakistanis accuse leader of being soft on India

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) — Other countries praised Pakistan's president after he signaled new flexibility on the flash-point issue of Kashmir, but hardliners in his own country accused him of being soft on rival India.

Meanwhile, the nuclear-armed South Asian neighbors announced the resumption of passenger- and freight train services between the two countries, beginning Jan. 15, after a gap of two years.

Pakistan and India nearly fought a war in 2002, but tensions have recently eased. Last month, they began a cease-fire at the military line that divides Kashmir, where they'd routinely shelled each other for years.

President Gen. Pervez Musharraf said on Thursday that Pakistan was willing to look beyond a long-standing U.N. resolution that calls for a referendum in the disputed Himalayan region. The resolution has been the bedrock of Pakistan's Kashmir policy for half a century, but is strongly opposed by India.

On Friday, India responded positively to Musharraf's remarks.

"We have always suggested flexibility. It is Pakistan which has been very rigid. It is Pakistan which keeps talking about the centrality of that (Kashmir) issue," External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha told reporters in India.

"If there is any change in or modification in Pakistan's position, that is something which India will always be ready to welcome," he said.

On Friday, India responded positively to Musharraf's remarks. "We have always suggested flexibility. It is Pakistan which has been very rigid. It is Pakistan which keeps talking about the centrality of that (Kashmir) issue," External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha told reporters in India.

"If there is any change in or modification in Pakistan's position, that is something which India will always be ready to welcome," he said.

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WORLD

Business forces elf layoffs at Santa park

HELSINKI, Finland (AP) — Santa's workshop may not be the joyous place it was in years past for the tens of thousands of tourists expected to visit northern Finland this winter.

Many of the elves who work at the SantaPark attraction near the Arctic Circle are spending the last few days before Christmas twiddling their thumbs. Santa laid them off to cut rising costs.

"I feel really dejected, because being an elf is part of my identity," said Milja Vilmia, who was told her job as an elf helping Santa no longer existed. "Something will definitely be missing this Christmas."

Business is booming in Lapland, a vast area known as the last wilderness in Europe where traditionally nomadic Samis — or Lapps — herd reindeer. But SantaPark, which has accumulated \$550,000 in debt in its five years of operation, has only seen visits decline.

"The work is seasonal so we have to cut costs in all possible ways," said Ville Rajala, managing director of the tourist attraction 520 miles north of Helsinki.

SantaPark is open from November to January, and briefly during summer for visitors who want to see the area when the sun doesn't set for several weeks.

The park is a vast cave which doubles as an air raid shelter, contains a carousel, elves' booths that sell trinkets and souvenirs, and a restaurant. It has yet to post a profit.

Company officials are confident Santa lovers will respond. For now, they have little choice but to tighten Santa's belt.

"We used to have 120 people on a monthly salary, which was ridiculous. Now we are down to three full-timers," Rajala said Saturday.

Just 12 people staff the attraction now.

Finnish children believe Santa hauls from a mountain in Lapland. And the Nordic country has cultivated the idea that Santa is Finnish, and that he makes toys there.

Last year, more than 600,000 people visited Lapland — three times the number who live there. Santa's post office in Rovaniemi, the capital of Finnish Lapland, received 600,000 letters from around the world.

The number of registered hotel-nights spent by foreign visitors in

Lapland during December and January has jumped from 76,700 in 1995-1996 to 215,000 last year.

Tourism officials expect a new December record this year of more than 100,000 foreign visitors, with at least 380 chartered flights, mostly from Britain. Last December, 52,000 British tourists spent \$13.6 million in Lapland.

When it was in operation, even the Concorde flew direct from London to Rovaniemi on the Arctic Circle, which has a runway equipped for military aircraft that patrol the 790-mile border

Finland shares with Russia.

But that hasn't helped SantaPark, which has been accused of overstaffing and mismanagement. Tourists are checking out Santa's post office, the Arctic museum and reindeer farms instead.

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BUSINESS PROFILE

2004

Great Harvest a family-owned, community oriented franchise

Great Harvest Bread Co. has bread that is out of this world. The nationwide bakery franchise is so well known for its tasty breads and sweets that its bread sticks have helped feed the crews of eight NASA space shuttle missions. Today, that commitment of baking only the best can be found right here in the Magic Valley as the husband and wife team of Jason and Misti Maisch stone grind and hand knead a variety of bakery goods for the Magic Valley.

After several years of farming in eastern Idaho, Jason and Misti decided it was time to make a career move. They were familiar with the Great Harvest Bread Co. and knew about their reputation for their delicious homemade, high protein, high fiber, and whole grain breads. To entrepreneurs Jason and Misti, it sounded like the perfect opportunity.

After completing the application process, Great Harvest officials gave Jason and Misti the "thumbs up" on opening a store in Twin Falls. Great Harvest, a few years back, had previously scouted south-central Idaho, but decided against opening a store there due to the relatively small local population. However, after receiving the Maisch's application, Great Harvest officials decided to give the Magic Valley another look, and they liked what they saw. This time around, the Magic Valley showed considerable growth and a strong locally based economy. That was almost three years ago.

The difference between Great Harvest Bread Co. and other national franchises is their philosophy of encouraging freedom-based franchises. The Montana based company doesn't believe in pressuring each individual store to operate the same. On the contrary, Great Harvest has successfully found the middle ground between the advantages of a traditional franchise and the fun of a let's-do-it-all-ourselves start-up.

For franchise owners like Jason and Misti, they write their own rules, but do so within the context of a community of like-minded and like-talented and like-spirited owners. When they opened their store on Locust St N., they were able call upon the experience of 140 other owners and 20-some years of experience from the leaders in Montana. But their store and its baked goods reflect their individual personalities and tastes, along with the needs and wants of the Magic Valley community.

Jason and Misti don't sit around and wait for the opportunity to help members of the community, they seek it out. Nothing goes to waste at the end of each day, the majority of the bread left on the shelves is distributed between local food banks, charitable organizations, and churches. For Jason and Misti, like other Great Harvest store owners, their business is only as strong as their community.



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OPINION

Opinion Editor: David Cooper - 733-0931, Ext. 246

EDITORIAL

Take the time now to learn new truck routes

Twin Falls residents should pay close attention to a proposed truck route south of the city. Because once 18-wheelers start rolling, it will be too late to stand in the way.

The Southeast Twin Falls Regional Corridor Study has been in the works for a year, aiming to identify the best highway route connecting Interstate 84 to U.S. Highway 93 and Jackpot, Nev.

Perhaps Orchard Drive improvements could be included in study's list of priority projects.

Plans already include improvements to the south part of Eastland (south of Kimberly Road) to handle trucks.

In addition to those needs, the study is looking at a list of improvement projects for roads and intersections. That's using good foresight, since new rules passed by the Legislature raise the maximum allowable weight on trucks from 105,500 pounds to 129,000 pounds on certain roads - including Highways 30, 74 and 93.

Many new trucks have improved axles that distribute truck weights evenly. But some people fear the heavier loads will create greater wear and tear on the roads anyway.

A case for Upper Snake dams

There's more scientific data to counter the relentless agenda of environmental activists in the salmon recovery debate.

James Anderson, a University of Washington scientist, released a study last week concluding that increased flows from Upper Snake River reservoirs would have no significant benefit to salmon and steelhead runs.

Environmentalists criticized the research, suggesting Anderson produced it as a consultant for hire, and that he reached the conclusion he was paid to reach. But Anderson said his study was part of his normal work with the Bonneville Power Administration. He said he interpreted results of established studies over a period of years.

The Times-News

Stephen Hartgen... Managing Editor... Mike Smit... Advertising Director... The members of the editorial board and writers of editorials are Stephen Hartgen, Clark Walworth, Steve Crump, David Cooper and Shelley Hidenour.

The daughter of Strom Thurmond returns home



DAVID S. BRODER

COLUMBIA, S.C. - She entered the hotel bathroom slowly, her head high, a small woman in a bright red suit, and let two of her adult children take her hands as she came up the three steps to the restroom. The camera wall was lined with TV cameras, and in the three sections of seats, curious South Carolina citizens, both black and white, drawn by the drama of her story, outnumbered the reporters.

building, where they had been building news bulletins going around in highest. The guy who burned the Confederate flag down here has been barred from ever entering the state Capitol again. That's the image we have to fight.

man who espoused separation of the races but exploited a powerless young black woman sexually, she could have started the racial tensions never far below the surface. Instead, she spoke kindly of her father's outreach to her and the financial support he provided. She seemed entirely sincere in saying that she had kept her silence about her parentage all these years out of respect for him - a debt the senator's other children acknowledged last week by their ready acceptance of her claimed paternity and her friendships.

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Getting in touch

Want to make your feelings known to your representatives in Congress? Here's how: Sen. Mike Crapo In Twin Falls, call or write: Linda Norris, senior regional director 202 Falls Ave., Suite 2 Twin Falls, ID 83301 734-2515; Fax 733-0414

Saddam's last blow to U.S. could come at trial

Well, we got him. Now the question is - what are we going to do with him? Surely some sort of trial lies in Saddam Hussein's future, whether it takes place in the United States, in Iraq or somewhere else. And there probably isn't a "dream team" of lawyers anywhere on the planet who can save his keester at this point.

upheaval in Iran in the late '70s that brought about the ouster of the Shah (another one of our less-than-savory allies) and Reagan's foreign policy team saw Iraq as a necessary check on the spread of Islamic extremism in the Middle East.

But he may still be able to do some damage to his American adversaries even in his weakened state. At the very least, Saddam could take some of the shine off the American victory in Iraq if he is tried in a public forum and the complete history of his relationship with the United States is detailed for all the world to see.

America had some inkling of the kind of man we were dealing with even then. We knew, for example, that he was using chemical weapons against the Iranians and against the Kurds in his own country. Still the aid and intelligence flowed uninterrupted to our "friend" in Baghdad. By 1985 we had supplied Saddam with \$1.5 billion in weapons equipment and technology, including some items that eventually aided their infamous WMD program.

Saddam has been a thorn in our side since he invaded Kuwait in 1991, and a lot of people feel that taking him down was not only the right course of action but also long overdue. Iraq is better off without him, the Middle

East is better off without him, and yes, the United States is certainly better off without him.

"I'm going to my first appointment," Coble said, "and what do I see on the marquee of the CNN

For the moment, at least, they were not blacks or whites, they were South Carolinians, able to acknowledge and deal with their past and the reality of their complex history and heritage.

David Broder is a columnist for the Washington Post.

President Hillary? Why the fuss?

The lines of people eager to see her snake around the block in virtually any city she visits on her tour. Like a rock star, she sells out any venue she sets her sights on. At the top of her game, she's treated like royalty.

MYRIAM MARQUEZ

I just don't get it. Hillary Clinton keeps wowing Democratic crowds and crushing all presidential wannabes in the polls, but she insists she's not running. She just wants to be the junior senator from New York, she says. She just wants to back any Democratic candidate able to quash President George W. Bush in 2004, she adds.



In fact, Hillary's record in the Senate has been moderate in a schizoid sort of way. She backed Bush's war against Iraq, for instance, and now tells adoring crowds to be patient about rebuilding Iraq. Yet she and her wandering husband, Bill, also have pumped up Wesley Clark, the antiwar general who's a Johnny-come-lately to the Democratic Party, as the Dems' best bet to unseat Bush.

Now she's the senator that polls show comes the closest to beating Bush, except she's not running, and she keeps telling reporters at every stop that she won't run - in 2004 anyway. Why reporters keep asking is beyond me.

Hillary's negatives are as strong as her positives. Of course, Hillary gets votes from liberals without question. But moderates and independents?

By the time the Monica scandal broke, I was calling for Clinton to do the honorable thing and step down. But once it became clear Republicans had orchestrated the Starr Chamber to dig up dirt, any dirt, to impeach the president, and the holier-than-thou crowd, led by Newt Gingrich and Henry Hyde, turned out to be as sleazy with their own affairs to hide, well, the hypocrisy was bipartisan.

In South Florida this week to raise money in West Palm Beach for a women's hospital, sell more of her best-selling "Living History" memoir (a yawner) and raise a million bucks for the Democratic National Committee at a swank dinner in Miami, Hillary showed once again she's more popular today than she was a decade ago when the lawyer told reporters she wasn't going to be a first lady who sat around baking cookies and serving tea to guests.

Hillary's negatives are as strong as her positives. Of course, Hillary gets votes from liberals without question. But moderates and independents?

Hillary's negatives are as strong as her positives. Of course, Hillary gets votes from liberals without question. But moderates and independents?

So here we are in the midst of all this Hillary-mania. I don't know what to make of it. America's first female president Hillary Rodham Clinton will fly first. Dinosaurs will roam the Earth again. W will put down his ax and hug a tree as his Texas ranch before that ever happens.

Myriam Marquez is an editorial page columnist for the Orlando Sentinel.

OPINION

OPINION

Nuclear power offers advantages for Idaho

In her Dec. 3 letter, Carol Sperry raises many key issues that Idahoans must face to plan our energy future. I would like to expand the discussion. It appears that she and I agree that we must increase our energy independence, while protecting Idaho's environment. We also agree that we want existing nuclear waste moved out of Idaho. I suspect that we agree that long-term environmental hazards like global warming must be addressed, so that expansion of fossil fuel burning is not desirable. We want a clean Idaho for our children.

How many people realize that Idaho imports a greater percentage of its electricity (on average) than any other state (30 to 60 percent), according to statistics from the Energy Information Agency. This means we are at the mercy of other states' selling electricity to us. Worse, most of Idaho's electricity comes from hydropower, which often damages ecosystems.

So, what is to be done? I think the answer is nuclear power and, in limited places where they are economic, biomass, wind and solar. For example, we need to find ways to make easily transportable fuels to replace foreign and fossil oil. Hydrogen from nuclear or biomass sources seems worthy of research effort.

Ms. Sperry notes two of the disadvantages of nuclear power, radiation and waste. Although unseen and often feared, radiation is part of the natural world. Hundreds of nuclear power plants operate around the world, producing very little radiation, a few percent of what we get naturally from living at high elevation in Idaho. Ms. Sperry claims that nuclear waste "can never be completely contained." She believes stored-yet-disposed-no. However, it is actually possible to recycle the bulk of used nuclear fuel, putting only a few percent into permanent geological disposal sites. Many nations recycle used fuel. Several nations, including the United States, are making progress toward geological disposal of

used fuel.

I think we need the advantages of nuclear power, while working to ensure ourselves that

it is done right and engaging in constructive dialogue. For more information, Idahoans can refer to the Web site of the American Nuclear Society (www.ans.org).
STEVE PIET
Idaho Falls

Trucking group will get rolling in Idaho

To the Magic Valley: We have seen the light at the end of the tunnel, but it was not light but yet another train headed right at us. The officers committee of the United American Independent Truckers Association will be looking in Twin Falls to find and secure a headquarters office and media studio. Likewise, I myself will be looking in the community of Shoshone for a home and facility to base and operate my vehicle recovery and towing service. While Utah might be to some in Idaho as the better place, trust me it is not. Metro Utah is light years behind Idaho. I learned my lesson, and now I'm working to come home.

PATRICK MONTGOMERY
Layton, Utah

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Recovered: Missing agent's body found near Yuma, Ariz. Page B6

MAGIC VALLEY

City Editor: Chad Baldwin, 733-0931, Ext. 234

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The Times-News

Sunday, December 21, 2003

Section B

Remember: Scrooge had his reasons

A few reasons to be cranky this holiday season:

1. The No. 1-best selling toy in America is "Hockey-Pokey Elmo," in which the furry and annoying Sesame Street character sings and boogies - hey, last year his gig was the Chicken Dance - to the familiar children's song.

Touch the bright red creature's hand and he puts his right hand in and pulls his right hand out (you know the drill) and shakes it all about. Then he turns himself, and your checkbook, all about.

This would have been truly bad news for the Magic Valley boy, Larry LaPrise, who wrote the tune in the late 1940s for his swing trio to perform for the apres-ski crowd at the Ram Bar in Sun Valley. LaPrise received royalties sporadically almost until his death in 1996.

But at \$24.99 a pop, Elmo is bringing in serious money now. The cuddly monster appears on national retailer KB Toys, list of 20 must-haves, received one of 22 2003 T.O.Y. (Toy of the Year) awards from FamilyFun.com magazine - where more than 900 kids across the country test and vote on the toys - and is listed as out of stock on the amazon.com Web site.

So a guy works all his life, stumbles upon a little success, and eight years after his death, finally hits the jackpot - only to have Geoffrey the Giraffe (the Toys R Us national spokesperson) keep the cash.

Stumbag? That's what it's all about.

2. The 12 Days of Christmas got a more expensive this year. Yet in a major slap in the face to Idaho's dairy industry, the Eight Maids-a-Milking didn't even get a raise.

It's quite true, PVC Advisors, a Pittsburgh-based wealth management services company, every December notes up the cost of the "12 Days of Christmas," as per the venerable Yuletide song. The tab this year, for a partridge in a pear tree, two turtle doves, etc., is \$65,264 - up from \$54,954 last year.

Four Calling Birds went from \$316 to \$400, 11 Pipers Piping from \$1,614 to \$1,982 and 12 Drummers Drumming from \$1,749 to \$2,147. But Eight Maids-a-Milking? \$41.20, same as last year.

Worse still, their jobs went to China.

The abundance of cheap labor in countries such as China have contributed toward increased pressure on U.S. manufacturers to outsource their unskilled labor overseas, and evolve toward higher-skilled areas, to maintain profitability," said Jeff Klempert, chief investment strategist for PNC Advisors. "Unfortunately, the unskilled Maids haven't managed an increase in price for their services in many years."

Very Merry Christmas, Magic Valley dairyfolk.

Far better, it seems, to be a swimming swan. The magnificent seven got a 57 percent bump over last Christmas, from \$2,100 to \$3,500.

True, they're probably union swans. But I bet they don't have dental coverage.

3. Ramadan comes but once a year.

Dave Sass of Twin Falls points out that Muslims, who mark the holy month of Ramadan with mortification and self-imposed misery, have nothing on American Christians in December.

"We buy a 'thoughtfully selected' Please see CRUMP, Page B7

Snowpack levels

Watershed	% of Avg.	% season peak**
Upper Snake Basin	102%	35%
Salmon Falls	105%	33%
Salmon	93%	31%
Oakley	98%	29%
Big Wood	91%	28%
Little Wood	103%	33%
Henry's Fork/Teton	113%	38%
Big Lost	105%	32%
Little Lost	87%	29%

As of Dec. 20

*A comparison of basin snowpack, on this day, with a 30-year average.
**An indicator of basin snowpack for the entire season, which peaks in late May.

Officials play tour guide at Anderson

By Karin Kowalski
Times-News writer

TWIN FALLS - County officials received mixed responses at a tour Saturday afternoon of the vacant Anderson Lumber Building at 960 Eastland Drive, which the county may purchase.

If the plan goes through, the Twin Falls County could relocate more than half its approximately 300 employees to one location and save on operating expenses, said

Mark Brunelle, county director of research and development.

County commissioners will have to move fast to make this purchase happen. The owner of the property, Stock Building Supply, wants to make the deal this year for tax purposes.

In order to use the building for offices, the county needs to have the city of Twin Falls amend the property's planned unit development from designating a lumberyard to offices. The new PUD would allow

Meeting Monday

Twin Falls City Council will meet at 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 22, at the council chambers at 305 Third Ave. E. to consider the county's request to change the Anderson Lumber building's planned unit development from a lumber yard to county offices.

offices and prohibit anything beyond temporary storage in the lot behind the building.

ings. The Twin Falls City Council will consider the change Monday.

County officials will finance the \$3.2 million purchase through Wells Fargo Bank and pay it off over about 10 years using about 1 percent of the budget's capital improvements fund. The building would have cost more if not for a \$1.8 million donation from the owner.

The property generates about \$55,000 a year in taxes, but it will be taken off the tax roll. Please see ANDERSON, Page B7

Former dog handler sues county

He says animal was taken away from him in retaliation

By Chad Baldwin
Times-News writer

GOODING - The Gooding County Sheriff's Department's former dog handler says he was demoted and the animal taken away from him in retaliation for a dispute regarding overtime pay.

Kirtus Gaston filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Boise earlier this month seeking return of the Belgian Malinois, "Nollie," to his care, reinstatement of his previous position, and payment of hundreds of hours of overtime for which he says he was not compensated.

Gooding County Attorney Phil Brown said Friday the case will be turned over to the county's private insurance carrier, but he disputed a number of assertions in the lawsuit. Sheriff Shaun Gough, who's named in the complaint, declined to comment on the case.

According to the lawsuit, filed by Healy attorney Cynthia Woolley, Gaston routinely worked overtime as a sheriff's deputy starting in April 1997 but was never paid for it. Starting in June 2002, Gaston's job as a deputy included work as the department's canine handler. He was responsible to care for and feed the dog around the clock but was not paid for the time he spent training, cleaning, feeding and exercising the animal, the lawsuit says.

Federal law allows law enforcement officers to receive compensatory time off instead of overtime pay, the lawsuit says. But Gaston, who accrued more than 300 hours of comp time, was repeatedly denied the ability to take it, and his requests for overtime pay were rejected as well, his attorney wrote.

Brown said the county denies the assertion that Gaston wasn't allowed to take comp time.

On Nov. 19, Gaston sent a letter to Gough demanding payment for the extra hours he had accrued, the lawsuit says. The sheriff responded by taking away Nollie and Gaston's assigned patrol car, indicating that Gaston needed to consume all of his comp time before returning to work, Gaston's attorney wrote.

The lawsuit characterizes those actions as a demotion and suspension, each requiring notice and a hearing - which Gaston wasn't given.

Brown said Gaston was not suspended and was simply told by his boss to not return to work until he had used up his comp time. Gaston resigned from the sheriff's department a week ago, Brown said.

And the sheriff gave Nollie to Please see DOG, Page B7

Your local guide to the brightest Christmas lights

Readers list the top 12 holiday displays in area

The Times-News

1. 3616 N. 2800 E., Twin Falls (Washington to the water tank to the road heading to Jackpot - go one mile on Highway 74). This house can be seen from the road. About 25,000 lights feature reindeer, trees, angels, a Nativity scene and a lighted corral.
2. Check out Woodridge Drive in Twin Falls. Then go to Skyline Drive and Julie Lane - and visit the Heatherwood subdivision. Before you head home, drive down Hiawatha Way and see this year's newest trend in holiday decorations - inflatable characters. Take Meadow View off Elizabeth to see a display which features characters of every kind and lots of lights. This display can also be seen from South Hankins Road, Twin Falls.
3. 345 Seventh Ave. E., Twin Falls. These lights should be on a Christmas card, or should be a pattern for gingerbread.
4. 2044 Bitterroot Drive, Twin Falls. This home has lots of lights, decorated shrubbery, animated deer and lighted trees. It is on a corner, so there is viewing from two sides.
5. 291 Tyler, Twin Falls. This home is decorated for every holiday all through the year. This month, it's decorated in preparation for the birth of the Christ child.
6. 1140 Fifth Ave. E., Twin Falls.
7. 1858 Sigrid Ave., Twin Falls (behind Taco John's off Addison).
8. This home is decked out for Christmas with lots of lights.
9. 835 Northview Drive, Twin Falls (two blocks from the Moose Lodge on the corner).
9. Jerome Cheese Co., 49 W. 100 S., Jerome. The display features a "Santa and sleigh" that is 12 feet tall and 50 feet long. There are 20 7-foot-tall candy canes, too, and candles with animated flickering flames that are 10 feet high. A waving 7-foot-tall Santa beckons visitors. The display includes thousands of lights.
10. 615 E. Main, Jerome.
11. 3725 Buhler Road, Filer (south on Highway 93, two miles south of the Highway 30 interchange). Some 40,000 lights - on shrubs and on the house - point the way to reindeer and angels.
12. 302 E. Sixth, Rupert. The green and white house has many different decorations and lots of lights - for kids and adults.

CHRISTIAN DRAPER/Times-News Staff

Officials examine annex

Jerome county plans to turn a former store into courtrooms

By Dixie Thomas Reale
Times-News correspondent

JEROME - The county plans to remodel the old Ridley grocery store building, located in the 200 block of West Main Street, into a judicial annex.

Jerome County bought the building several years to use for courtrooms.

Bruce Poe and Liza Morris, architects from Cole Associates Architects of Boise, presented prospective building plans to the county commissioners, clerk, sheriff, several judges and other court-related county employees Friday morning.

Poe told the group that the current plans incorporate earlier plans and staff-requested changes. They'll be revised at least one more time before the final draft will be submitted to the county for acceptance.

In its present form, the plans include 104 public parking spaces - with landscaping. There will be a secure parking area with locking gates and parking spaces for the law enforcement vehicles and the judges' cars. The secure parking area will include an area where the prison bus can unload inmates to be brought into holding cells.

The front entrance will be for the public and will identify the building as a civic building with security and an open gathering area. The 32,000-square-foot building will contain both juvenile and adult probation areas, four courtrooms, the clerk's office, a law library, judges' chambers, law clerks' offices, a conference room, storage rooms, a custodial area, a jury room, holding cells for inmates waiting their turn in court and consulting areas for inmates and their lawyers.

In the present form, the building will have access to the front portion of the building. The back portion of the building will be secure.

At this point the county is looking at four courtrooms. The largest would seat 102 people in the gallery, the smallest would hold 36 people.

Morris suggested a mezzanine should be built on top of the holding cells for long-term storage for the clerk's office.

"Since the jail area will be built like a bunker, why not take advantage of that strength by placing a storage room on top of the cement box," Morris said.

The ceiling of the storage area would probably only be 7 feet high, but would be sufficient for storage and would be located just up a stairway from the clerk's office.

Please see JEROME, Page B7

Kimberly School Board proposes 2006 graduation standards

Students would have to come within six points of ISAT proficiency levels

By Margaret Jones
Times-News correspondent

KIMBERLY - The School Board is proposing that students graduating in 2006 pass three sections of the Idaho Standards Achievement Test with a score that's within six points of the state proficiency level.

The proposal came down Thursday as the Kimberly School Board reviewed the State

Board of Education's shift on its ISAT policy. The state board had originally intended to set a standard where students graduating in 2005 pass the ISAT at proficiency level or not graduate. But the state board now is proposing a phase-in process for implementing the ISAT requirement.

Kimberly School Board members felt that even though the state board is dropping its requirements for 2005, the district should keep its requirements in order to give students the best education possible. Students would have to come within six points of the state proficiency level in reading, language arts and math, Superintendent John Garner said.

Garner also asked School Board members to develop a policy that would take into consideration special education stu-

dents who would not be able to meet these requirements, but would have an individualized education plan.

The graduation policy will be brought before the board at its January meeting.

In other School Board business:

- Legislative liaison - The board voted to appoint Dave Fuller as the district's legislative liaison to the Idaho School Board Association. He will give the district an opportunity to let the Legislature know the needs of schools from the perspective of the School Board.

- More district homes - The school has received information on two more proposed subdivisions in the district. Sawtooth Estates will be a small development locat-

ed at the corner of Addison Avenue and 3600 E. There will be only four units of one acre or more in this development.

The elementary school, Harvest Moon Subdivision, will be located on the east side of 3400 E., one fourth of a mile north of Addison Avenue. It will have 40 lots and is being developed by Devco Brown.

- Christmas songs - The elementary after-school music group and Hand Bell Choir sang an assortment of Christmas songs at the School Board meeting. The \$6,000 hand bells were lent to the students by the Redeemer Lutheran Church. The choir - under the direction of Roberta Beck - is a group of students who meet after school because they enjoy singing.

MAGIC VALLEY/WEST

Professor takes students on tour of Lewis and Clark expedition

CARLSBAD, N.M. (AP) - A love for history prompted Doug Dinwiddie to strike out on a 9,000-mile historical journey.

In late August, Dinwiddie, a professor of social science at New Mexico State University-Carlsbad, began a 31-day sabbatical across the United States following the Lewis and Clark expedition route.

Although initial preparations for the original, historic journey took place in the East, the expedition left St. Charles, Mo., on May 21, 1804, by boat on the Mississippi River. The expedition reached the Oregon coast on Nov. 7, 1805, departed for home on March 18, 1806, and returned on Sept. 23, 1806.

"I'm a history person, and I'm always looking for upcoming significant anniversaries," he said, citing the upcoming expedition's bicentennial celebration in 2004-06.

About four years ago, Dinwiddie offered a course on Lewis and Clark with class travel along a portion of the trail.

During the upcoming 2004 summer session at the university, he's offering an in-depth course on the Lewis and Clark expedition, but on a grander scale. This time, the group will tour major sites along the trail lasting about 2.5 weeks.

sites along the trail," he said. "Montana has a lot going on because Lewis and Clark spent a lot of time there, and North Dakota was where they spent the first winter."

Registration for the class begins in April 2004. The class should begin the first of June. The travel portion of the class is expected to start on June 12 and intersect the trail at Council Bluffs, Iowa. The trip will end around June 29 near Astoria at the point Lewis and Clark refer to as Cape Disappointment on the coast.

Parts of the trail today are still primitive such as the Idaho leg and can only be accessed through tour companies on horseback or canoe, he said.

Those signing up for the summer class will be responsible for their own transportation and meals. Plans are to camp in developed campground with shower facilities to hold down the cost of the trip. He suggested students travel together and share expenses whether traveling with a camp trailer, tent or recreational vehicle.

"I intend to discuss you on the Oregon coast," he said with a smile. "I've done travel classes before, but this is by far my most ambitious."

Dinwiddie said he has followed the Gold Rush route to California, the Santa Fe Trail and has taken

what he calls the Rocky Mountain Field Study and another trip called the Southwest Field Study through New Mexico, Arizona and the southern portion of Colorado.

"The largest group I've taken included 28 people in 1994," he said, adding he's taken as few as a dozen on other trips.

During the 31 days along the Lewis and Clark trail, his wife accompanied him for about 10 days, his father-in-law for about a week, and the rest of the time he traveled solo.

The purpose of his sabbatical was to find a route with specific stops of interest for his upcoming class. Before this recent trip, he had visited bits and pieces of the expedition route.

One thing he can't deny is planning such a trip "took a lot of reading," he said. "It's difficult to interpret history and be politically correct at the same time," he added.

A story about Sacagawea being their guide is just a myth, he said. That may have been true for a day or two, but her significance most of the time was to translate some of the Indian languages encountered along the way.

In the journals, she is referred to as the Indian woman, added Dinwiddie. Her presence with a baby seemed to assure the corps not be considered a war party.

DEATH NOTICES

County attorney resigns

DUCHESNE, Utah (AP) - Duchesne County Attorney Clevel Hatch has submitted his resignation in a flap over his pay raise.

In January, he was to receive a 5 percent pay increase - \$3,120 more a year, the lowest raise for any elected official in the county. He had asked for an \$11,700 boost.

County commissioners, who set his increase, are to get an 8.6 per-

cent raise or \$3,129 more a year. In September, Hatch met with commissioners to seek a pay increase for his two deputy county attorneys, his receptionist, the county victim's right advocate coordinator and himself.

He told commissioners that after one year on the job, he simply could not afford to keep working for the county at his current salary.

Oralia Rendon Chapa

MOUNTAIN HOME - Oralia Rendon Chapa, 53, of Mountain Home and formerly of Burley, died Thursday, Dec. 18, 2003, at Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise. A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 23, 2003, at the Hansen Mortuary Burley Chapel. Friends may call one hour before the service at the mortuary.

Barbara Ross

JEROME - Barbara Ross, 69, of Jerome, died Saturday, Dec. 20, 2003, at her home. Arrangements will be announced by the Hove-Robertson Funeral Chapel in Jerome.

Ruth DeThomas

RUPERT - Ruth DeThomas, 85, of Rupert, died Saturday, Dec. 20, 2003, at the Minidoka Memorial Hospital Extended Care Facility. Arrangements will be announced by Hansen Mortuary Rupert Chapel.

SERVICES

Ace (Ashel) E. Caldwell of Rupert, service at 1 p.m. Monday at Hansen Mortuary Rupert Chapel, 710 Sixth St.; family and friends may call one hour before the service Monday.

Brent Rounds of Twin Falls, service at 11 a.m. Monday at Reynolds Funeral Chapel in Twin Falls; burial will follow at Sunset Memorial Park; friends may call from 3 to 8 p.m. today at the funeral chapel.

Karen Harmon Vincent Rementer of Sandpoint and formerly of Rupert, service at 11 a.m. Monday at the Parke's Magic Valley Funeral Home, 2551 Kimberly Road, Twin Falls; interment will follow the service at the Hazelton Cemetery; friends may call one hour before the service at the funeral home.

Bradley Allen DeCarr of Rogerson, service at 2 p.m. Monday at the Fliler High School; interment will follow in Sunset Memorial Park (White Mortuary, Twin Falls).

Nettie Marie Melissa McCool of Gooding, service at 11 a.m. Monday at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Gooding; visitation from 5 to 7 p.m. today at Demaray Funeral Chapel in Gooding; interment will be at the Elmwood Cemetery in Gooding.

Trent Wesley Davis of Wendell, service at 11 a.m. Tuesday at the Wendell Gymnasium with burial following at the Wendell Cemetery; friends may call from 5 to 7 p.m. Monday at Parke's Magic Valley Funeral Home, 2551 Kimberly Road, Twin Falls.

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Your parents took care of you... Let us take care of them. Rosetta assisted living. Burley 677-5451, Twin Falls 734-9422.

As Christmas time once again approaches, we pause to offer each of you, our friends, a heartfelt wish for a joyous Holiday Season... Merry Christmas, Everyone. From your friends at Parke's Magic Valley Funeral Home & Crematory, 2551 Kimberly Road, Twin Falls, Idaho (208) 735-0022.

MOVE YOUR 401(K). CALL THE STATE FARM GROUP TO REVIEW OR CHANGE YOUR PLAN NOW. State Farm Insurance advertisement listing various agents.

OBITUARIES

For obituary rates and information, call 735-3278 Monday through Saturday. Deadline is 4 p.m. for next-day publication. The e-mail address for obituaries is obits@magvalley.com. Death notices are a free service and can be placed until 4 p.m. every day. To view or submit obituaries online, or to place a message in an individual online guestbook, go to www.magvalley.com and click on "Obituaries."

Edith Rebecca Alexander - Buhl



Edith Rebecca Alexander, 91, of Buhl, passed away Dec. 20, 2003, at Willowbrook Assisted Living Facility in Twin Falls.

Edith was born in Twin Falls, Idaho, Sept. 29, 1912, to John and Susan Harrison. The family moved to a farm in the Castledale area, where Edith grew up with her brothers and sister. She did her schooling and graduated from Castledale High School. Ray J. Alexander, a fellow Castledale resident, fell in love with and married Edith, Sept. 13, 1930. The couple stayed in Castledale, where they had two children, Colleen and Mick. Ray worked in the timber industry throughout the Magic Valley, while Edith worked at home and raised the children. Ray and Edith moved to Buhl

later in life and Ray passed away in 1984. Edith was very content staying at home and loved to visit with her neighbors and tend to projects. She recently moved to Willowbrook in Twin Falls, where she stayed until her death.

Edith is survived by her daughter, Colleen (Bob) Ticker of Twin Falls; son, Mick (Tom) Alexander; six grandchildren; and numerous great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Ray; two brothers; one sister; and two half-brothers.

A viewing will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 22, 2003, at the Hansen Mortuary Chapel, 130 N. Ninth in Buhl. A graveside service will be held at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 23, at the West End Cemetery in Buhl.

Marcos Verdin - Oakley



Marcos Verdin, 56, of Oakley, died Thursday, Dec. 18, 2003, at Cassia Regional Medical Center in Burley.

He was born Oct. 7, 1947, in San Francisco del Rincon, Guanajuato, Mexico, the son of Andres and Rosa Maria Martinez Verdin. He attended schools in Mexico. In 1972, Marcos moved to Oakley, Idaho, where he started his working career with Chick and Bud Bedke. He later became a Stone contractor for Northern Stone in Oakley, where he has worked for many, many years.

He is survived by his father, Andres de Mexico; children, Mistelle Marshall of Sicily, Italy, Marc Shadden of Rupert and Blaine Shadden of Las Vegas, Nev.; his grandson (who was his pride and

joy), Christopher "George" Marshall of Sicily, Italy; 10 sisters and two brothers, including Fernando (Aurelia) Verdin (who was by his

side when he died) of Fort Worth, Texas, and Maria (Juventino) Estrada, also of Fort Worth. He was preceded in death by his mother; two sisters; and three brothers.

A vigil service with recitation of the rosary will be held at 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 22, 2003, at Little Flower Catholic Church, 1601 Oakley Ave., Burley. The funeral Mass will be celebrated at 11 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 23, 2003, at Little Flower Catholic Church with the Rev. Father Jean Garreta as celebrant. Burial will be in the Basin Cemetery near Oakley. Family and friends may call from 4 to 5 p.m. Monday and from 10 to 10:45 a.m. Tuesday at the church. Arrangements are under the direction of Rasmussen Funeral Home, 1350 E. 16th St., Burley.

Winifred 'Winnie' C. Brown - Gooding

Winifred "Winnie" C. Brown, age 91, of Gooding, died Saturday, Dec. 20, 2003, at Gooding County Memorial Hospital.

Winnie was born Nov. 16, 1912, in Pocatello, Idaho, the daughter of Samuel and Charlotte McKeown White. She was raised in the Nampa, Idaho, area and attended Happy Valley School. On Jan. 10, 1933, Winnie married Marvin Brown in Vale, Ore. After their marriage, the couple resided in Nampa for a period of time and then moved to California, where they

resided in various locations. After her husband's death in 1972, Winnie returned to Nampa and then to Gooding in the late 1970s to be near her sister, Mary Egeler.

Winnie was a member of the First Christian Church in Gooding. Survivors include her daughters, Patricia Story of Crescent City, Calif., and Bonnie Jo Brown of Gooding; three grandchildren, Laura, Steve and Janet; nephew, Gene (Donna) Egeler of Gooding; eight great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren. She was preceded in

death by her husband, Marvin; sisters, Myrle and Mary; brother-in-law, Ben Egeler; brother, Sammy; and one granddaughter, Winola.

A graveside service will be conducted at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 23, 2003, at Kohlerland Cemetery in Nampa, Idaho, with the Rev. Andy Morris officiating. For those who desire, contributions may be made to Hospice Visions, 308 Shoshone St. E., Suite 1, Twin Falls, ID 83301-6106 or to cancer research. Arrangements are by Demaray Funeral Chapel in Gooding.

Krystal Michelle Leisle Zack - Fresno, Calif.



Krystal Michelle Leisle Zack was born Oct. 19, 1979, and left us on Dec. 18, 2003.

She is survived by her husband, Tim Zack; her baby daughter, Kileca Zack; her father, Jeff Leisle; her mother and stepfather, Karen and Curt Plummer; her sisters, Kim Dobson and Jennifer Plummer; her brothers, Jeffrey Leisle, K.C. Plummer and Darrin Plummer; and her grandparents, Ed and Alvina Leisle. She also leaves many loving aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

Krystal grew up in Easton, Calif. She later moved with her family to Coarsgold, Calif., and then to Twin Falls, Idaho, where she graduated from Twin Falls High School and attended the College of Southern

Idaho. As an adult, she moved back to the Coarsgold area to begin her family.

Krystal was a sweet, caring and beautiful young woman, and we will dearly miss her. Visitation will be held from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 21, 2003, at the Lisle Funeral Home in Fresno, Calif. The funeral will be held at 2 p.m. Monday, Dec. 22, 2003, at the Lisle Calaveras Chapel. Interment to follow at Washington Colony Cemetery.

A trust fund will be set up in remembrance of Krystal Zack for her daughter, Kileca Zack. For information regarding the trust fund, please contact Lisle Funeral Home at (559) 266-0666.

MONDAY'S EDITORIAL: Payoff for Idaho: Congress should properly fund national parks to help Western economies.

Sympathy Flowers... The traditional symbol of loving and caring. Blooming Things. 2823 Addison Avenue, Twin Falls, ID 83301-7342. Inside Country Mortuary.

The kindness and sympathy of relatives, neighbors and friends in our recent sorrow will always remain with us a precious memory. Our sincere thanks and gratitude for all those comforting acts. The family of Mary Twedy & Mae Knefel's family.

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UNIVERSITY PLACE CONTROVERSY

State Bar investigates lawyers in University of Idaho probe

BOISE (AP) — The Idaho State Bar will investigate whether attorneys in two law firms had conflicts that violated the Professional Code of Ethics in a project to build a University of Idaho satellite campus.

The bar will investigate allegations made by attorney Larry Prince in a report to the State Board of Education that examined how the University of Idaho handled its offer to locate a campus in Boise, said Bond Andrews, bar counsel.

The report raised questions about how the Boise law firms of Givens Pursley and Elam & Burke represented multiple and sometimes conflicting parties during the development of University Place.

Prince's report said university and foundation officials made questionable loans to finance upfront costs. University President Robert Hoover resigned in the fallout, and

the \$136 million, three-building complex was scaled back to one \$50 million building after the financing scheme became untenable.

Bar officials were not specific about which attorneys they were investigating.

"Someone is going to need to read the report, digest it and decide if there is need for additional investigation," said Andrews.

The report said the two firms may not have adequately disclosed their conflicts. It specifically cited the role of Roy Eiguren, who was a University of Idaho lobbyist, a director of the Idaho foundation and whose firm — Givens Pursley — was representing former developer Civic Partners.

The report did not accuse Eiguren or either law firm of any criminal conduct. Givens Pursley represented the university, its foundation, Civic Partners and two other companies involved in property transactions.

Elam & Burke represented the foundation and the Capital City Development Corp. Both firms got letters from clients waiving potential conflicts, as required under the Idaho Rules of

Professional Conduct.

If an attorney is found to have violated the code, they could face punishment ranging from a private reprimand to being disbarred from practicing law.

The investigation will be confidential, Andrews said. If the matter is resolved by a private reprimand, it would remain confidential.

If it moves to the stage where the Bar's board of commissioners finds grounds for a formal charge, then a complaint is filed with the Bar's Professional Conduct Board and it becomes public.

Then it proceeds like a civil case and there may be a trial before the board. The Professional Conduct Board may make a recommendation to the Idaho Supreme Court, which imposes formal sanctions.

"We want the opportunity to clear the air, the cloud of suspicion created by the report," said Ken Pursley, managing partner of Givens Pursley. "Keep in mind the Prince Report did not reach any conclusions."

Alynn Dingel, an attorney with Elam & Burke said he had not fully reviewed the report and could not comment.

Pueblo demands proof of heritage

ISLETA PUEBLO, N.M. (AP) — Letters sent out to Isleta Pueblo members asking them to prove their heritage are causing anger within the tribe.

The letters were sent to 132 of the approximately 2,800 people listed as tribal members, according to a member of the Isleta Tribal Council.

The letters notified those people that the pueblo is reviewing its membership rolls and that they would have until Jan. 2 to prove they are at least half Isleta.

A fill-in-the-blank family tree

form going back three generations was attached to the letter and asked for documentation of great-grandparents' degree of Isleta blood.

The letter asked for supporting documentation, including birth certificates, marriage certificates, divorce decrees and court documents that would show paternity.

Until they can prove their heritage, the letter states that their annual per capita payments from the tribal government would be withheld. The per capita payments, which are shares of tribal

funds dispensed annually, were handed out earlier this week.

Lupita Abeita, who was born in a one-room adobe house in the middle of the pueblo in 1914, was among those who got the letter saying her \$2,000 Christmas payment would be withheld.

"The money doesn't really matter," said Abeita's daughter, Juana Jiron. "My mom is so hurt. She's just devastated."

Jiron said her mother told her: "If they don't recognize me as a child-of-the-pueblo, who am I? What am I supposed to do?"

Landfill workers save Christmas presents

PAYSON, Utah (AP) — Presents were saved from the city dump just in the nick of time for one 5-year-old girl left without her parents this Christmas.

The gifts were placed in a black garbage bag and meant to be shipped to the girl in Eugene, Ore. However, they were mistakenly given to the garbage collectors Friday.

It was only after the garbage truck was gone that Judy Lee discovered the black plastic sack was missing. She immediately realized what happened, and the race was on.

Hoping to save the girl's Christmas, she called Payson city landfill superintendent Kent Fowden for help.

"The truck that had picked up Lee's garbage was the last load of the day, and though the truck had been emptied, the driver had not compacted the load because it was only partially full."

"She told us that was going on and I told the Cat operators to stop and not push the garbage any more," he said. "We went and sorted through it and found it. It was really great."

"We have a lot of calls about

things that are lost in the garbage and this is kind of unique because we did find it uncrushed," he said. "It is almost amazing."

Lee calls it a miracle. "I just feel so blessed. Those fellows at the dump were an angel for me today. It was a really unpleasant thing they did for me — it is like a miracle to me, and this little girl will have a great Christmas because of it," she said.

For years, Lee and her family have chosen one child or family to help each Christmas, she said. But after injuring her neck, knee and hand months ago, Lee was laid up for months and had to quit her nursing job.

Still in pain and without much money, Lee said she had decided to forgo the family's usual Christmas tradition.

But then Lee collected \$300 and purchased presents for the girl after learning of the child's plight from Diane Worr, her friend in Oregon.

The girl's father suffered a heart attack and is being treated in the Eugene hospital where Worr works, Lee said. The girl's mother died two years ago.

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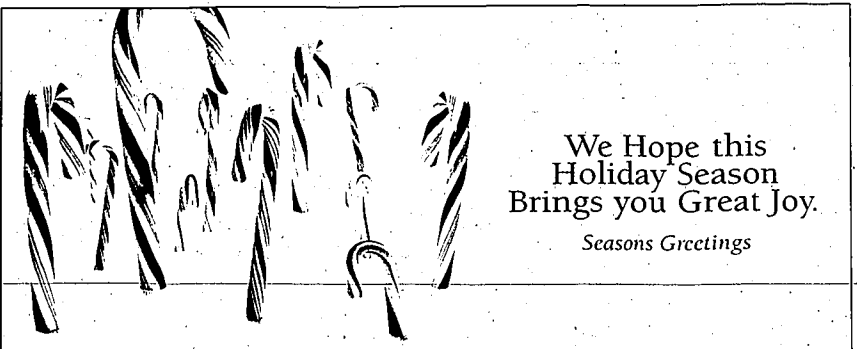
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NATION

Police arrest students in athlete threat case

AMERICAN FORK, Utah (AP) — Two high school students, including one who asked for a firearm for Christmas, are in custody after allegedly posting death threats to athletes on an Internet Web site.

The boys, age 15 and 16, will remain in juvenile detention for suspicion of making terroristic threats "until released" by a judge, police Lt. Darren Falslev said. Their identities were not released.

"They used the word 'jock,'" he said. "The threats were directed at anyone associated with the athletics program."

"I have a bag full of bullets waiting for you," one of the students allegedly wrote on the homemade Web site, hosted on the free server GeoCities but now shut down. "Judging how you will be jocks and can probably barely count, I'll make a deal with you, I'll give you a counting lesson as you count the shells."

The Web site also listed biographies for the two. Both listed German as an interest, and one boy claimed to like killing, playing video games and "burning" and "butchering" Jews.

Pictures were also posted of a faculty member and another of two students playing basketball. Falslev said the suspects insisted those in the photos were not targets, but rather chosen randomly. Police believe the two boys did not have access to weapons, but Falslev said one boy wanted one for Christmas.

"One of the fathers told us that the kid had asked for a firearm for Christmas and the father said he purchased it for him last Saturday," he said. "The kid didn't even know he had it coming. The father said based on this information he was obviously not going to get it."

The parents of both "have been 100 percent cooperative," he said. Neither boy had any previous police record.

Police became aware of the threats after a student at American Fork High School went to a teacher with information about the Web site on Monday. The teacher told the principal, who called police.

"This is exactly how it should work," Falslev said. "Students should be getting involved and taking it to teachers..." They know things that we don't."

Laci Peterson's mother sues son-in-law

MODESTO, Calif. (AP) — The mother of Laci Peterson sued her son-in-law Friday seeking more than \$5 million in the deaths of her daughter and unborn grandson nearly a year after the pregnant woman vanished.

Sharon Rocha filed two wrongful death lawsuits in Stanislaus County Superior Court claiming that Scott Peterson's conduct was "willful, wanton and outrageous beyond the ability of ordinary human beings to comprehend."

Scott Peterson, 31, has pleaded innocent to charges of murdering his wife and their unborn son.

The remains of the two washed ashore in San Francisco Bay in April near where Scott Peterson said he was fishing Christmas Eve when his wife went missing from their Modesto home 80 miles away.

Prosecutors are seeking the death penalty.

Peterson's attorney Mark Geragos would not comment directly on the civil suits because the criminal case is ongoing, but he said, "It's all going to be moot when he's found not guilty."

Rocha filed the suits to prevent Peterson from profiting from the

case, asking the court to set aside future earnings in a trust for Laci Peterson's heirs.

The lawsuits contain Rocha's harshest public statements about Scott Peterson. She testified at his preliminary hearing in October that she thought the world of him until her daughter disappeared.

Laci Peterson's family stood by him publicly for a month after the disappearance as the case went unresolved, but their support died when he admitted he had been having an extramarital affair with a Fresno massage therapist.

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IDAHO

Corps wants comments on plan to dredge river

LEWISTON (AP) — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is taking comments through Jan. 17 on its plan to dredge the shipping channel and ports on the Snake River next winter.

The plan calls for removing 315,600 cubic yards of sediment from the river bottom and taking it to another location downstream in Lower Granite Reservoir.

The Corps is mandated to maintain a shipping channel in the Snake River that is at least 14 feet deep. Sediment accumulated since the last dredging is filling the channel and making maneuvering in the berths at the ports of Lewiston and Clarkston difficult.

The dredging has to take place between Dec. 15 and March 1 when there are fewer juvenile fish using that section of river.

Environmentalists contend dredging and dumping of the sed-

iment will harm salmon, which are on the endangered species list.

And one group says the plan looks nearly identical to the 20-year blueprint a federal judge halted two years ago.

The National Wildlife Federation challenged the corps' plan then, successfully arguing the agency did not consider alternatives to dredging.

"The federation said it is prepared to go to court again to stop the current plan.

"It's not clear to me why the corps keeps rolling out these one-year plans that are clearly illegal," said spokeswoman Jan Hasselman.

A corps spokesman said the plan is different from the one previously halted.

"The plan we are talking about is a one-year maintenance dredging plan — not the 20-year plan that is tied up in court," Dutch Meier said.

More people head to food banks, fewer to soup kitchens

COEUR D'ALENE (AP) — The national and state economies may be improving, but the increasing number of people resorting to Panhandle food banks have not heard the news.

"Yesterday we had 15 new families come in that have never sought service before," Alice Wallace with the Bonner County Food Bank in Sandpoint said Thursday.

"Last month, we saw about 3,000 people, 1,300 under 18," she said of the pantry, which goes through up to 25,000 pounds of food a month.

Those seeking relief had either been laid off or had their hours cut. Some were new people coming into the area looking for work, she said.

"A woman said she put off coming here as long as she could. Her husband didn't want her to come at all. But she had to feed her family of five," Wallace said.

At the Community Action Partnership Food Bank in Coeur d'Alene, donations are on par with the previous year. But for the first week of December, the food bank has seen 36 percent more families than the same week in 2002, said Mark Haberman, program manager.

October was the food bank's busiest month, he said. Then

November topped that, and December outpaced November.

"We are seeing something that may turn into a longer trend," Haberman said.

While more people are heading to food banks, some area food kitchen directors are stumped why fewer are coming to their tables.

John Dunlap, director of the American Legion's kitchen in Post Falls, figured there would be more needy families this year, but there actually are fewer being served.

"I'm not sure what's happening, but we're not getting a good turnout," Dunlap said. "We're down from last year. We were getting 20 to 25 a day, but now there's only 10, 12, 14."

At St. George's Catholic Church in Post Falls, Irene Ohmstedt said about 80 would show up last year, but the number has fallen to about 60 this year on Thursday nights.

"We're down as well, but I don't have any idea why," she said.



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Authorities find agent's body in Colorado River

PHOENIX (AP) - Rescue workers recovered the body of a U.S. Border Patrol agent Friday night from the depths of the Colorado River near Yuma.

Joe Brigman, spokesman for the Border Patrol's Yuma sector, said crews recovered and identified the remains of James Epling shortly after 7 p.m. Friday.

"It's real sad news for us," Brigman said.

The 24-year-old husband and father of three had last been seen chasing a group of illegal immigrants along a trail that bordered the Colorado River on Tuesday and then seemingly vanished.

Epling's wife is also eight

months pregnant, Brigman said.

Extensive searches were conducted along the river's banks, while divers searched its waters using sonar and other high-tech equipment.

Brigman said that Epling "was recovered in very close proximity to where we thought he was."

"The area was actually the most treacherous of all the areas we searched," Brigman said.

The 54-degree water reached a depth of 27 feet at that point, Brigman said.

The FBI will now take over the investigation to determine the circumstances surrounding Epling's death. An autopsy will also be conducted, Brigman said.



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Rupert, United sign off on settlement

By Shelley Ridenour
Times-News writer

HEYBURN—The city of Rupert and United Electric Cooperative have signed off on a settlement agreement in a lawsuit between the Bonneville Power Administration and its customers in the Northwest.

Rupert and United are named as parties in the lawsuit, United Electric Manager Ralph Williams said.

All of the named parties have been asked to approve the settlement agreement by Jan. 21, 2004. Williams isn't optimistic that all parties will sign, though. The Strohsmith Public Utility District, which is BPA's largest customer, has come out against the agreement, he said.

If all parties don't sign the agreement, the settlement can't occur. In that case, though, Williams expects another attempt

to settle the litigation.

"It's extremely important to weigh in on this issue and to let BPA know our positions," Williams said. The board of directors for United directed Williams to endorse the agreement. Board members believe the settlement is a "much better alternative to a long, expensive litigation," he said.

Williams has been hired as a consultant by the city of Rupert on the matter, and he and City Council members concurred the city should also sign.

"A 10 percent reduction is important to Rupert and its citizens," Rupert City Administrator Roger Bagley said. "I hope the settlement happens and those who may be opposed take a careful look at the overall financial impacts."

Other Mini-Cassia cities with municipal electric systems aren't parties to the litigation, but the

Burley City Council approved a resolution last week indicating the city's support of the settlement plan. Heyburn City Council members will consider a similar endorsement at their January meeting.

The lawsuit was filed by customers of BPA after BPA officials reached a new 10-year rate agreement with investor-owned utilities that buy power from BPA. Those companies were to be sold electrically at a lower rate than electric cooperatives, municipal electric systems and public utility districts would be charged from 2001 to 2011, Williams said.

That agreement led the other buyers to sue BPA.

The investor-owned utilities have signed off on the agreement, Williams said, in spite of the fact their rates could be higher. If the lawsuit is settled, all other BPA customers will pay less, Williams said. United Electric officials

already have agreed to pass any rate reductions on to their customers, as the cooperative always does, he said.

BPA officials have estimated rates would drop by about 10 percent if the lawsuit is settled.

Other electric providers may or may not pass the rate reductions on, he pointed out. If the lawsuit is settled this winter, the lower rates go into effect April 1, 2004.

"Lower electric rates are extremely important to our area during these tough times," Williams said.

In Mini-Cassia, Williams estimated there are about 17,000 electric customers — that's meters — served by United Electric and the cities of Heyburn, Burley and Rupert.

Shelley Ridenour is editor of The Times-News Mini-Cassia Bureau. She can be reached at 208-677-4042, Ext. 642, or by e-mail at slide-nour@magicalvalley.com.

Elk causes crash, three injured

HAILEY — Three people were injured Friday night in a two-vehicle crash on Idaho Highway 75 north of Hailey near mile marker 117.

A 1996 Chevrolet Tahoe was being driven south at about 10:50 p.m. when it collided with an elk and entered the northbound lane where it collided with a 1993 Chevrolet Blazer. John Lughnan,

of Ketchum, was driving the Blazer and police did not release the name of the other driver and passenger. All three had to be extricated from their vehicles before being airlifted to St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise.

Idaho State Police and the Blaine County Sheriff's office are investigating the crash.

Car crash injures four in Jerome

JEROME — Four people in a two-vehicle crash after one failed to stop at a stop sign in Jerome, an Idaho State Police spokesman said.

Melynda Kuntz was driving a 1995 white Ford Contour heading southbound on 100 E. Road at about 2:50 p.m. with her son, Steven, in the back seat. She failed to stop at the stop sign at 200 S. Road, colliding with the side of a 1985 white Ford 4by4, said ISP Sgt.

Doug McFall. Martin Perkins was driving the 4by4 east on 200 S. Road with his brother, McFall said.

After colliding, both vehicles went off the road. The Perkins brothers were wearing seat belts, McFall said. The Kuntzes were not and had incapacitating injuries. All four were transported to Magic Valley Regional Medical Center.

The state police are investigating the collision and citations against Kuntz are pending, McFall said.

Father turns drunken driving tragedy...

IN UNUSUAL DESIGNATED DRIVER EFFORT

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — His son was drunk when she was on a two-week exchange student from Brazil.

Now almost a year later, former police officer Ryan Nielson's behind the wheel of an unusual designated driver program aimed at getting those who've had one too many off Utah streets.

Armed with a rented SUV, a cell phone with a headset, and a handful of volunteers that occasionally includes his 75-year-old father, Nielson takes strangers home, for free, six nights a week. It's a program called "Designated Driver's Job."

The call, Nielson says, usually goes something like this: "Hi Ryan, I've been drinking," Nielson then picks up the person and takes them home with "no questions asked, no judgments passed."

Nielson gave his first free ride September 1, about nine months after an accident that almost killed 22-year-old Ana Bussman. His son, Matthew Nielson, 25, was driving home from a party during the Sundance Film Festival with his girlfriend when he rounded a corner, veered into the opposite lane and hit Bussman's car from behind as she walked home from work just after midnight Jan. 25.

Nielson didn't get the call from his son about the accident until the next day.

"Dad, I've got some horrible news. I was arrested for DUI and I hit a pedestrian and I don't think she's gonna live," Nielson said, reciting the call from his son. Matthew had already been arrested and bonded out when he called his father.

Twenty minutes later, Ryan Nielson stood at Bussman's bedside, holding her hand and praying. "I knew I had to be with her," he said. "I just had to see her."

Doctors said the woman wouldn't live and they were just waiting for her family to come to the U.S. from Brazil before removing life support and she eventually recovered. Nielson said she walks again.

Matthew Nielson has since started a three-year prison term for the accident. But before he was sentenced, he visited Bussman in the hospital and the woman's father forgave him.

"That's when Ryan Nielson began brainstorming, groping for ways to prevent further tragedies. The answer was simple: Get drunk drivers off the road."

"I want to have Salt Lake have one of the finest designated driver's programs around, and it has to be everybody's concern," he said.



Ryan Nielson addresses members of the legislature and others during a meeting Wednesday in Salt Lake City. Nielson is looking for sponsorship of his 'Designated Driver 4 U' program.

So Nielson made up thousands of hot-pink-colored cards with his phone number on them, and started handing them out to downtown bars and nightclubs, hoping they'd encourage imbibing patrons to think twice before driving. Nielson says he's given about 200 free rides so far.

A typical week-end, Nielson says, he's given a couple dozen calls. He's had passengers vomit in the vehicles he rents to transport them, and Nielson says he needs a shower at the end of each night because of the boozey stench that fills the vehicle. He's even had inebriated passengers offer to volunteer for the program.

Nielson wants "Designated Driver 4 U" a full-time job, and is just one step away from quitting his day job at a graphics company. He's met with beer distributors, local leaders, and state legislators to get funding, and though small donations are rolling in, they're not enough.

Nielson says he is trying to gather bigger potential sponsors — such as the state of Utah — that his program doesn't promote irresponsible drinking. As for the state, one lawmaker isn't sure what role the state could, or should, have.

"Many people have shied away from this for the mixed messages," said state Sen. Karen Hale, D-Salt Lake City. "What I'm doing now is trying to gather more information. I think we have to look at all sides. It has to be carefully crafted so people don't think you're sending a message that you can be as irresponsible as you want."

Flu accounts for dip in blood donations

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — The flu is being blamed for a drop in blood donations, which already traditionally suffer a decline during the holiday season.

People with the flu shouldn't give blood until they are symptom-free. In fact, anyone who has had a fever must wait three days after it subsides to donate.

Associated Regional and University Pathologist Inc. (ARUP) in Salt Lake City is especially feeling the pinch.

Donations to ARUP Blood Services, which supplies blood to University of Utah Hospitals & Clinics, Primary Children's Medical Center, Shriners Hospital for Children and the Huntsman Cancer Institute, are noticeably down from last year, said spokeswoman Lisa Kalantzes.

The period from Dec. 23 to Jan. 14 is typically the most difficult time of the year to find donors because people are busy shopping, entertaining and traveling.

This season's early flu cases have made it even more trying. As of Friday, 4,353 laboratory-reported influenza cases were reported in 21 counties, according to the Utah Department of Health. Of those cases, 151 patients were hospitalized and four people died. One death was a pediatric patient and the remaining deaths were reported in adults.

The American Red Cross Blood Services Utah division also believes the flu is contributing to decreased donations.

"We have seen some impact," said spokeswoman Judy Christensen.

“We know you’re busy and enjoying the holidays, but it only takes an hour of your time to give a pint of your blood to help save up to three lives.”

— Judy Christensen, American Red Cross spokeswoman

Christensen. "We know people aren't coming in because they're sick, and people are busy during the holidays. We have to work harder to make sure we don't get into a blood shortage situation. Right now our supplies are holding steady."

The Utah division supplies blood to 40 hospitals around the state.

"We know you're busy and enjoying the holidays, but it only takes an hour of your time to give a pint of your blood to help save up to three lives," Christensen said. "We think it's worth the investment."

Trust donates \$1 million to preserve meadow

The Jackson Land Hole Trust, town unite to protect land

JACKSON, Wyo. (AP) — The Jackson Land Hole Trust has contributed \$1 million toward protecting an open meadow in the heart of Jackson.

The trust and the town joined forces in the first of a series of land purchases and conservation easements that seek to protect the Karns Meadow property, trust officials said.

The back part of the main building contains at least seven offices, a few closets and handicapped-accessible restrooms.

The 11-acre property includes a 26,000-square-foot building behind the main one, which the county would divide in half and use half for storage while renting the other half back to Stock Building Supply.

With all the new space, the county would be able to sell off some of its 20 buildings and offset the cost of remodeling the Anderson Lumber building, which has been closed and sitting empty since May 2002.

creek's origin and terminus is just eight miles. But the creek flows about 40 miles through the Gros Ventre range, National Elk Refuge, town of Jackson and Karns Meadow, and the South Park area before emptying into the Snake River.

Mattson-Emerson said by protecting the meadow, the land trust and town will preserve the last stretch of Flat Creek that is undeveloped on both sides as it flows through town.

Parks and recreation officials will create hiking, biking and cross-country skiing trails around the perimeter of the property. Handicapped access will also be provided.

Anderson

Continued from B1

If the building is purchased, public defenders and law enforcement officials will stay in their current location, but a majority of other county employees, including the commissioners, clerk, auditor, treasurer, their assistants, planning and zoning officials, agents and assessors would move into it. The new building would also house the department motor vehicles as well as license plates, the parks and waterways department and the weeds department, said Commissioner Gary Grindstaff.

The cost of remodeling the building is estimated to be about \$700,000 and could take up to a year and a half, Grindstaff said.

About 35 people attended the tour and information session where commissioners showed off the bare, dusty facilities and explained possible uses.

Because the county's proposed use of the property may be determined to have less of an impact on the neighborhood than a lumber yard, the county may be able to forgo the usual public meetings held before a purchase of a property. However, county commissioners will want to have the informational session.

"We don't want this to be perceived as a steamroller," Commissioner Tom Mikesell said.

The lot has 225 parking spaces in front and enough room on the side for county employee parking. The main building's largest room has 35,000 square feet and is already wired throughout with phone, electrical and computer cables. It also has 24-foot ceilings with 2 more feet of rafters, so a second story could be added into the existing building in the future. The county maintenance department and the parks and waterways departments would each have large rooms with garage doors attached to the back of the building, greatly expanding their space, Brunelle said.

Those who took the tour had mixed feelings about the possible purchase, although many preferred a county building to another store.

Darlene Brown, who owns two houses across from the property, said she is concerned about traffic when county employees arrive at 8 a.m. and depart from work at 5 p.m. She said the traffic is already heavy at those times and vehicles are often rear-ended when people hold up traffic to turn left from Eastland Drive onto Ninth Ave. E.

"It's really dangerous," Brown said.

These problems could lower the property value of homes in the area, she said.

Harold Gerber, an architect from Twin Falls, said he might propose remodeling the building if it is purchased.

"It looks like it is a very viable thing to be done," Brunelle said.

Brunelle said the county has 19 offices and facilities in addition to the county courthouse. These buildings vary in age and condition from antique and energy inefficient to brand new. By consolidating locations, the county can save on heating, air conditioning, equipment sharing, phone bills, roofs and wiring.

Loggers: Timber sale may be expensive

LEWISTON (AP) — Nez Percé National Forest officials have proposed a timber sale with 20 million board-feet of wood in the Slate Creek Ranger District, but some loggers say it may not be worth bidding because the effort would cost them too much money.

Some dead trees would be burned and 26 miles of existing

roads would be closed and obliterated to limit vehicle access.

The U.S. Forest Service said the project is needed to improve fish habitat, restore whitebark pine and reduce the risk of wildfires.

Some harvest will occur in old-growth stands of timber but forest officer Mike McGee said the old trees will not be cut.

Crump

Continued from B1

in with a freshly harvested fir tree, which we carefully adorned with gaudy heirlooms in clever old country themes. We manage to find additional time for church, friends, and family in between the football playoff games and picking up our college-aged children — and then strand ourselves by giving them the car to go see their friends.

"And then we do New Year's Eve."

Times-News features editor Steve Crump reminds you that there are only 62 shopping days left until Lent.

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Jerome

Continued from B1

Several ideas were suggested for additional improvements and changes to the plans.

County Clerk Cheryl Watts was concerned about where the vault would be located. She said her office needs to have court files available so employees can easily supply them to the courtrooms for the judges' needs. She kept them available for access to the media, land and title companies and the general public, while keeping them secure, too.

County Commissioner John Eorrietta, who is a lawyer by profession, said judges often like to keep their own law clerks in the courtroom with them. The courtrooms need to be flexible enough to allow for the extra clerk if needed, he said.

Poe said the total cost of the project is not known at this point. However, the clerks' offices, jail

cell area, custodial area, court rooms and public restrooms will be about 12,000 square feet. At a hypothetical estimate of \$100 per square foot the cost of that portion of the building will be \$2.2 million. The project may have to be built in phases, Poe said.

Commissioner Teronica Lierman said the county at this point has budgeted \$11 million for the refurbishing of the building. The county needs to decide what can stay at the courthouse for a while or the county will have to wait until the whole price of the project is saved before construction begins, Lierman said.

Poe said the architectural firm will rework the plans again incorporating the suggestions and bring them back to the county for approval.

Then they will begin to talk about cost estimates.

Dog

Continued from B1

another deputy because if she had remained in Gaston's care, he would have continued to accrue overtime hours, Brown said.

"(Gaston) wanted to take care of the dog and accumulate overtime hours and get off," Brown said. "The sheriff has a limited budget, so in order to not have more overtime, another individual took over the dog."

In addition to seeking the return of Nollie and reinstatement of Gaston to his job, the lawsuit asks for payment of damages and attorney fees.

Gaston's lawsuit says he has

been "greatly injured," "held in ill-regard by others," that his "good character and loyalty" have been questioned and that he has been caused to suffer "much humiliation, embarrassment, mental pain and anguish."

The lawsuit also says that Gaston and Nollie will suffer "irreparable injury as a result of the loss of effective training and discipline" unless the animal is returned to him.

The sheriff's department bought Nollie about three years ago for \$4,000, using money donated by a local organization, Gough said. She has been used in drug searches.

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40 oz.

SAVE \$ 11.00 2003

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Chunk or Shredded Cheese
Albertsons Select Varieties • 2 lb.

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12 Pack Coke, Pepsi or 7eUP
Assorted Varieties 12 oz. Cans

SAVE \$ 54.08 ON 3 2003

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1 Pound Butter Quarters
Albertsons • Limit 2 Total Salted or Unsalted

SAVE \$ 51.70 2003

1.88

Tropicana Premium Orange Juice
Assorted Varieties 64 oz. • Limit 2 Total

SAVE \$ 51.61 2003

4/\$1

Albertsons Vegetables
Select Varieties 14.5-15.25 oz. Cans

SAVE \$ 52.16 ON 4 2003

2.88

Dreyer's Ice Cream
Select Varieties 56-64 oz. • Limit 2 Total

SAVE \$ 52.91 2003

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Nabisco Snack Crackers
Assorted Varieties 4.75-10 oz. • Limit 4 Total

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Wheat Thins
Assorted Varieties 12 oz. Cans

SAVE \$4.96 ON 4 2003

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400 Speed Film
Savon 24 Exposures

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2.99

Fresh Baked Cinnamon Rolls
Assorted Varieties 8 ct.

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2/\$3

Lay's Potato Chips
Select Varieties 11.5-12 oz.

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SPORTS

MORNING LINE SPORTSQUOTE

If he scored four touchdowns and we won the game, I'd probably be kissing him.

Cleveland Bronco coach Butch Davis, on whether he was troubled by the cellphone celebration of New Orleans WR Joe Horn.

TRIVIA QUESTION: Which quarterback was named MVP of Super Bowl XXXI?

IN BRIEF
BSU boosters plan to meet Tuesday
TWIN FALLS - The Boise State Booster Club will meet at Woody's Sportsbar and Grill at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday for the Fort Worth Bowl.

Open gym times available in Twin Falls
TWIN FALLS - The City of Twin Falls Parks and Recreation Department and the Twin Falls School District are sponsoring a free open gym on Sundays through Feb. 29 at Robert Stuart Junior High.

Candleridge offers inclusive golf packages
TWIN FALLS - Candleridge Golf Course is offering all-inclusive golf packages through Dec. 31.

Burley football team will be 'Santa's helpers'
BURLEY - Coach Scott Palin and the Burley High School football team are offering their services as Santa's helpers this holiday season.

CSI baseball camp will be held late next week
TWIN FALLS - The 23rd annual Southern Idaho Baseball Camp will be held Dec. 27-29 at the Eldon Evans Expo Center on the College of Southern Idaho campus.

TRIVIA ANSWER:
Doug Williams of the Washington Redskins.

Kimberly downs cold-shooting Shoshone

By Eric Larson
Times-News writer

SHOSHONE - It was just one of those nights for the Shoshone Indians and boys basketball coach Larry Messick. The Indians were able to sink only 11 field goals in Saturday night's non-conference home loss to the Kimberly Bulldogs, 52-28.

game was down from each team's prior efforts. Even when Kimberly (3-2) was at the free-throw line, the atmosphere in Indian Gymnasium was more opera house than frat party. Despite the poor shooting, Shoshone (2-5) went into the half down only three points; 21-19. Kimberly coach Roger Keller attributed the lack of offense to a lull in intensity and good interior defense from both teams.

either team by any means." The Indians might have been fine if they could continue to hold Kimberly to outside shots, but the Bulldog press worked down Shoshone, creating turnovers and leading Kimberly to a 31-10 second-half advantage. Junior guard Darin Musser led the Bulldogs with 15 points while senior post Ricky Zdrov added 12 points and six rebounds.

throughout the whole game packing it in and forcing us to shoot the outside shot." The entire Shoshone team came out flat, as senior post Tony Pereira led the team with only seven points after scoring for 25 in the Indians' last game against Dietrich. Pereira was a monster on the boards though, pulling down 15 for the control.

inside and I think that was the difference in the game. We just wore down Kimberly.

Kimberly travels to Buhl Jan. 2 for a SCIB battle. Shoshone returns to action Jan. 6 at Carnas County.

Minico proves itself



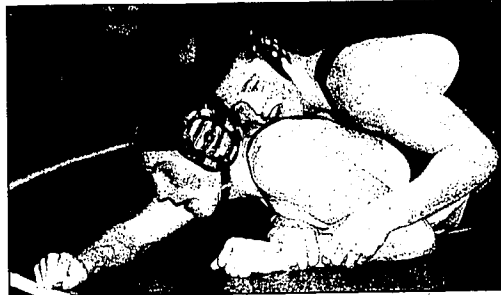
Spartans finish second behind Challis at Bear-Cat

By Kevin Colbert
Times-News writer

TWIN FALLS - It's no surprise the Minico Spartans are proving that they are perhaps the area's best high school wrestling team.

What may make a few jaws drop, however, is that the Spartans appear poised to wear the label as one of the state's better squads. Doubters can just look at Minico's second-place finish at the eighth-annual Bear-Cat Invitational that concluded Saturday at Twin Falls High School.

SALEM, Va. - John Gagliardi's record-breaking season ended perfectly, too, with St. John's as the Division III national champion.



Top, Minico wrestler Kasey Johnson, left, picks up and scores a takedown against Gooding's Cody Rogers in the final seconds of their 145-pound championship match at the Bear-Cat Tournament in Twin Falls Saturday. Johnson won the match 2-1. Above, Gooding's Helaman Bingham, top, works to gain control of Jerome's Britt Thelsson during their 160-pound championship match at the Bear-Cat Tournament in Twin Falls Saturday. Bingham won the match 7-4.

In the second round after Johnson failed in an attempt to use his trademark maneuver. "I had (Rogers) picked up in the second round, but he got out of that," Johnson said. "I thought I had two (points) there. I knew I couldn't tilt him (while I was) on top. I'm not very good riding, so I gave him the one (point) and it worked out."

St. John's Paul Gans takes down Mt. Union quarterback Zac Brunny during the NCAA Division III football championship Saturday in Salem, Va.

Patriots ground Jets, 21-16

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. - The New England Patriots can thank their defense for wrapping up home-field advantage throughout the playoffs.

Willie McGinest returned an interception for a score and the Patriots picked off Chad Pennington four other times, keying their 11th straight win with a 21-16 victory Saturday night.

Fittingly, the Patriots ended the Jets' final rally with an interception. Eugene Wilson picked off Pennington to preserve the victory; Pennington finished 24-of-43 for 229 yards and two running scores.

The Jets answered with a 16-play drive that chewed up 9:20 and ended with Pennington running for a 1-yard TD to tie it up. With the Patriots struggling offensively, the defense stepped up again.

New England has a total of six defensive touchdowns this season, which leads the NFL. Brady finished 12-of-25 for 138 yards and two scores, while Antowain Smith had 18 carries for 121 yards.

Garcia agrees to resign with Mariners ahead of deadline

NEW YORK - Seattle pitcher Freddy Garcia agreed to a \$6.75-million, one-year contract Saturday night, about two hours before the deadline for teams to offer 2004 contracts to unsigned players on their rosters.

Among those cut loose was Colorado outfielder Jay Payton, who hit .302 and set career bests with 28 homers and 89 RBIs. The Rockies agreed to a one-year contract with free agent outfielder Jeremy Burnitz that guaranteed him \$1.5 million.

SCORES AND STATS

BASKETBALL

NBA All-Time Series Eastern Conference Western Conference

WHAT'S ON T.V.

- Basketball: Women, Stanford at Texas Tech. 11 a.m.
Hockey: Flyers at Thrashers, ESPN2, 5 p.m.
Skiing: Moguls, Big Air and FreeSkiing, CBS, 3 p.m.

WRESTLING

San Antonio, Houston, Dallas, Phoenix, etc.

HIGH SCORES

High school basketball scores: Idaho Falls, Pocatello, etc.

BASEBALL

Major League Baseball scores: Yankees, Red Sox, etc.

FOOTBALL

NFL scores: Patriots, Colts, etc.

SOCCER

MLS scores: Seattle Sounders, etc.

BASEBALL

Minor League Baseball scores: AAA, AA, etc.

BASEBALL

Minor League Baseball scores: Single A, etc.

BASEBALL

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Area ski report

Agnes-Bain: Best 4.50, 10th.
Bridgeway: 4.50, 10th.
Maple Leaf: 4.50, 10th.

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USC wins second NCAA women's volleyball title

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Glants re-sign former CSI

STANFORD - Left-hander Scott Eyre agreed Friday to a \$2.45 million, two-year contract to San Francisco Giants, avoiding salary arbitration.

Rockies agree to one year, \$1.5M terms with Burnitz

DENVER - Jeremy Burnitz and Colorado agreed Saturday to a one-year contract that guarantees the outfielder about \$1.5 million, and the Rockies cut ties with Jay Payton.

Three basemen would rather be a backup in Seattle

SEATTLE - Three basemen Jeff Cirillo has blocked a trade to the New York Mets, saying he'd rather be a backup in Seattle than take his chances with another team.

Carroll, Mont. repeats as NAIA football champs

SAVANNAH, Tenn. - Tyler Emmert threw three touchdowns, passes to Mark Gallik to help Carroll College defeat Northwestern Oklahoma State 41-28 Saturday for its second straight NAIA championship.

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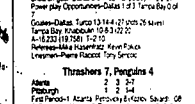
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For top three reports check out the sports page on Wednesday and click on Game Click.

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SPORTS

Falcons hold off Bucs: Loss eliminates Super Bowl champs from playoff contention

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Michael Vick relished the role of spoiler. "It feels great," the Atlanta quarterback said. The Falcons beat Tampa Bay 30-28 Saturday to end the Buccaneers' hopes of overcoming injuries—the jettisoning of Keyshawn Johnson and other distractions to repeat as Super Bowl champions.

"For us to come down here and knock them out of playoff contention was big for us. That was our goal all week — if we can't go they can't go."

It's been a miserable season for Atlanta (4-11), which lost Vick for the first 11 games with a broken right leg. Coach Dan Reeves was fired 11 days ago, and the Falcons were coming off a 38-7 loss to Indianapolis in their debut under interim coach Wade Phillips.

But with Vick in the lineup, there's always hope.

The third-year pro threw for 119 yards and two touchdowns against a Tampa Bay defense that shut him down twice last year.

The Falcons' defense did its part, too, intercepting four of Brad Johnson's passes and scoring once.

A furious Tampa Bay rally fell short when Travis Hahn batted down Johnson's two-point conversion pass with 27 seconds remaining.

With the Bucs trailing 30-7 going into the fourth quarter, Johnson threw three TD passes in the last 11 minutes, including an 11-yarder to Jameel Cook that gave Tampa Bay (7-8) a chance to send it into overtime.

But just as they have on numerous other occasions this season, the defending champs couldn't make one more play to get over the hump.

"You can talk about all the injuries and distractions we had," safety John Lynch

said. "But ultimately it comes down to what happens on the field."

Vick completed 8 of 15 passes and ran 12 times for 38 yards. The crew-TP passes to 6 yards to Alge Crumpler and 13 yards to Brian Fineman in the first half, then led a long-third-quarter drive that produced Jay Feely's 37-yard field goal for a 30-7 lead.

Vikings 45, Chiefs 20

MINNEAPOLIS — The Minnesota Vikings played the part of a desperate team perfectly on Saturday.

Omerito Smith ran for 146 yards and three touchdowns, and Randy Moss caught two of Daunte Culpepper's three touchdown passes in a 45-20 victory over the Kansas City Chiefs.

The Vikings boosted their postseason hopes and delivered a blow to the Chiefs' chances for home-field advantage

through the AFC playoffs.

Culpepper completed 20 of 29 passes for 260 yards and one interception as Minnesota, which opened the season with six straight wins and improved to 9-6, moved a half game ahead of Green Bay in the NFC North race.

Moss, playing with his puffed-out Afro protruding from his helmet, had seven catches for 111 yards.

Priest Holmes, held to 55 yards rushing and 50 yards receiving, scored three times for Kansas City and matched Emmitt Smith's 1995 NFL record with 25 rushing touchdowns in a season.

The Chiefs (12-3), who have wrapped up the AFC West and their first playoff berth since 1997, can still clinch a first-round bye if Indianapolis loses to Denver on Sunday.

A win at Arizona next week gives Minnesota the division title, regardless of what Green Bay does.



Atlanta Falcons quarterback Michael Vick throws a first-quarter touchdown pass to Alge Crumpler against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers Saturday in Tampa, Fla.

Broncos, Colts prepare for possible playoff preview

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — The Indianapolis Colts are getting ready for the postseason. The Denver Broncos hope they are, too.

With the Colts trying to wrap up the AFC South and the Broncos still fighting to get into the playoffs, Sunday night's game in Indianapolis has a playoff feel.

"It's fun to be in that mode," Broncos quarterback Jake Plummer said. "But we have to be maybe the best team in the NFL at that place."

The Broncos (9-5) have already spent a month on the brink.

After losing 19-10 at home to Chicago, Denver dropped to 6-5 and the playoffs seemed to be slipping away. Three straight wins have put the Broncos back in con-

tention, and they could clinch a postseason spot — by beating Indianapolis (11-3) and having either Cincinnati or Baltimore lose Sunday.

The Colts are taking a different approach after securing their fourth playoff trip in five years.

A win over Denver would give Indianapolis its first division title since 1959 and its second home playoff game since 1984.

Plummer has survived the pressure before.

In 1998, he led the Arizona Cardinals to wins in their last three games to qualify for the playoffs. That year, the schedule played into Plummer's hands,

with the last two games at home. This year, the schedule-makers weren't so kind.

Denver finishes the season with trips to Indianapolis, and Green Bay teams still fighting for playoff position. With Miami, Cincinnati and Baltimore all 8-6 and just one game behind the Broncos for the final wild-card spot, a loss could change everything.

"You always think they're most wins," Denver coach Mike Shanahan said. "Indianapolis is probably thinking the same way. It's a big game for them and for us."

Indianapolis is playing some of its best football of the season. Peyton Manning leads the NFL in touchdown passes (28) and yards passing (3,901). He needs 99 yards

to become the first player in league history with five straight 4,000-yard seasons.

Running back Edgerrin James has averaged 109 yards and scored seven touchdowns in the last five games, and last week Manning threw touchdowns to three different receivers.

The defense also is improving. It has forced nine turnovers the last three games and limited Michael Vick last week to 47 yards passing and 30 rushing.

Then there's Mike Vanderjagt, who beat the Broncos last year with two field goals from beyond 50 yards in the snow. He's made 38 in a row and needs two more field goals to tie Gary Anderson's NFL record.

The Broncos could be without

Holmes ties Smith's TD record

By Doug Tucker Associated Press writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — When his career as a Pro Bowl running back is done, Priest Holmes could probably find work as an offensive line coach.

Many backs, including some of the best, simply look for the hole and hurry to it.

But Kansas City's chess-playing superstar is constantly quizzing his blockers on technique, tendencies, footwork and scheme.

From one play to the next, he might ask which shoulder they're going to use on their man, whether they'll take him inside or outside.

Occasionally he'll even come with a suggestion or two.

"I've never seen a running back who understands my position as well as Priest does, and I've played with pretty good running backs," center Casey Wiegmann said.

The whole idea, of course, is to get that precious little edge on the defense, find a way to slide past a would-be tackler for one or two — or 30 or 40 — extra yards.

And, man, it is working for Kansas City's patient prober. For the second straight year, he is positioned in the final stretch to own one of the great seasons in league history. A year ago he injured his hip in the third game when he wrenched his right of the NFL touchdown record.

Now he's back and again taking aim. With one regular season game to go, the 29-year-old Texas native needs one touchdown to tie the record of 26 overall TDs set in 1999 by Marshall Faulk. He tied Ed Smith's record of 25 rushing touchdowns Saturday.

For the first time in three years he probably won't lead the NFL in total yards from scrimmage. Still, the season is unfolding exactly as Holmes envisioned during the spring while getting ready for what some feared could be a career-ending hip surgery.

"Somebody asked me what I wanted to do in the coming year," he said. "I said to score points. That would allow for the team to be successful because I've been in games where I've had 100-yard games, 200-yard games and that doesn't always equal a win. But when you score points you're going to have 'W's on the scoreboard."

Holmes seems finally to have fully regained his pre-surgery form. Two weeks ago, coach Dick Vermeil and others thought he began running with more quickness and authority than he'd shown all year.

Vermeil thought Holmes' three-touchdown, 94-yard game against Detroit last Sunday was his best outing since he hurt his hip at Oakland last December.

"He had his best week of practice and showed in his performance," Vermeil said. "I think he's on the rise from here throughout the remaining games we have the opportunity to play."

Although the Chiefs started 9-0 and Holmes remained among the league leaders in scoring and yards rushing, the closest to him could tell he was simply not himself.

"He wasn't following his blockers the way he had in the past," Wiegmann said. "He was still doing a great job, of course, but he'd get into front of you too fast instead of being patient. It took him awhile to get that patience back and hit the holes just right."

"We knew he'd work it out. It didn't take him long at all. One day it just fell into place, like we knew it would."

These Fish sticks only tasty to competition this time of year

By Jerry Greene The Orlando Sentinel

ORLANDO, Fla. — Finally, after all this time, Miami Dolphins coach Dave Wannstedt has said something that cannot be disputed even by the most ardent Fish hater:

"Take me out of the equation." Dave, we've been saying that for years.

But while Wannstedt has finally come to his senses, the rest of the frozen Fish sticks still don't get it. "Take free safety Breck Marion — please."

Here's Brock's take on the traditional holiday saxon: "I don't really think there's any legitimacy to us falling short in December. That's just something people tend to think is happening."

Right, Brock, like we tend to think the sun will rise in the East, doughnuts are a gift from the heavens and Paris Hilton is a sign that our civilization is crumbling.

IDOT OF THE WEEK: We must go outside the NFL for this special award to TNT basketball loudmouth Charles Barkley for his comment on the Joe Horn Cell Phone Incident: "If I had a gun, I want to have shot my TV. What set me, he had to devote a lot of thought and preparation to that stunt when he should have been thinking and preparing for the game." Right, Chuck, with a little more thought and preparation, maybe he would have caught more than four touchdown passes.

LAST WEEK: My momma didn't raise no fools. An outstanding 13-3 straight up (153.7) for the season plus a decent 8-5-3 against the spread (119.93-12 for the season). And now we learn the real explanation of Joe Horn's "Call Home" prank: "He'll learn. He's only 32." So in a Speed-Dial Upset Special, "Aints by 8."

Miami (8-6) at Buffalo (6-8) — Bills favored by 1.5. "Ok, we know the Bills are awful and we know Miami's Ricky Williams averages 14.5 yards when he plays them anywhere. But it's Buffalo and it's December. Bills by 14 degrees (chill factor)."

New Orleans (7-7) at Jacksonville (4-10) — Jags (!) favored by 1.5. "Got to love Aints Coach Jim Haslet for his philosophical explanation of Joe Horn's 'Call Home' prank: "He'll learn. He's only 32." So in a Speed-Dial Upset Special, "Aints by 8."

Baltimore (8-6) at Cleveland (4-10) — Ravens favored by 3. This is an easy one. It's a case of My Lord (Lewis) can beat your Jameel (White). Ravens by 6.

San Diego (3-11) at Pittsburgh (5-9) — Steelers favored by 6. Steelers WR Hines Ward is confused by his team's lousy record, saying, "You don't become sorry overnight." Sure you do, Hines — just look at the guys with the Thunderbolts on their dazed heads. Steelers by 14.

Washington (5-9) at Chicago (6-8) — Da Bears favored by 4.5. Washington QB Tim Hasselbeck

Sunday games

Miami at Buffalo
8-6 6-8
The Dolphins are 7-9 in December under coach Dave Wannstedt and can see if they win both remaining games. Denver has to lose twice for the Dolphins to make it as a wild-card entry. The Bills opened the season with playoff aspirations but can finish no better than they did last year.

Detroit at Carolina
4-10 9-5
Detroit can set a record for consecutive road losses after dropping its 23rd straight in Kansas City to tie the 1981-84 Houston Oilers. The Panthers finally clinched the NFC South last week after losing three straight games.

Washington at Chicago
5-9 6-8
New Orleans is the only one of these teams with an outside shot at the playoffs. But Chicago may be the hottest team, winning three of four. Jacksonville has its future QB — Byron Leftwich, who has played well for a rookie and seems to have huge potential. The Skins have to remake a mismatched team with a lot of big-time players but also a lot of holes. Despite its record, San Diego will probably keep Marty Schottenheimer. Bill Cowher also

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Tennessee at Houston
10-4 5-9
The Titans clinch a wild-card spot with a win but will probably have to start Steve McNair at quarterback, something they'd prefer not to do to keep him healthy for the playoffs. They have little choice — Billy Volek is out for the season.

NFL WEEK 16

Bengals have a huge task in Rams

The St. Louis Rams will continue their quest for NFC home-field advantage, while the Cincinnati Bengals, with a victory and a loss by Baltimore to Cleveland, would be a division champion for the first time since they won the AFC Central in 1990.

Baltimore at Cleveland
8-6 4-10
Baltimore fell back into a tie with Cincinnati by losing in Oakland last week and the Bengals now have the tiebreaker in the AFC North. The Ravens are 2-5 on the road, so this game won't be easy against a team that almost won in Denver last week.

N.Y. Giants at Dallas
4-10 9-5
Before the season, it would have been more likely that the records would have been reversed. The Cowboys' 35-32 overtime win at the Meadowlands in Week 2, for example, was considered a major upset and may have been the defining game for both teams.

Arizona at Seattle
3-11 8-6
Arizona hasn't won on the road and was beaten 38-0 by the Seahawks in Tempe. Seattle's only away victory this season. Seattle, 7-0 at home, remains alive for a wild-card berth.

Denver at Indianapolis
9-5 11-3
The Broncos can ensure themselves a wild-card berth with a win in their last two games. The Colts already have a playoff spot and can clinch the AFC-South with a victory.

Green Bay at Oakland
8-6 4-10
The Packers have to be careful here — the Raiders upset Baltimore last week to dump the Ravens back into a tie with Cincinnati in the AFC North.

Monday night

Cincinnati at St. Louis
8-6 11-3
The Bengals are tied for the AFC North lead with Baltimore and can win their first division title since 1990 if they win and the Ravens lose in Cleveland. The Rams are 7-0 at home and seeking the home-field advantage in the NFC.

San Francisco at Philadelphia
6-8 11-3
The Eagles, who have won nine straight, can clinch the NFC East by winning. San Francisco is 0-7 on the road.

Arizona at Seattle
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SOURCE: Associated Press

guarantees he will play better than last week. "Bald cut, Tim, considering you went 6 for 26 passing for 56 yards with 4 picks — a rating of zero-point-zero. And Coach Steve Spurrier promises to restructure, reorganize, regroup,

whatever you call it." If all else fails, Steve, why don't you redecorate? Da Bears by 12.

Cincinnati (8-6) at St. Louis (11-3) — Rams favored by 7. If you haven't noticed, the Rams are a little strange, starting with Coach

Mike Martz. Here's how DL Tyoka Jackson explains it: "When you feel good about yourselves and the head man trickles down confidence and security throughout the organization, you couldn't be in a rainstorm and you wouldn't know

Mike Martz. Here's how DL Tyoka Jackson explains it: "When you feel good about yourselves and the head man trickles down confidence and security throughout the organization, you couldn't be in a rainstorm and you wouldn't know

Jay Williams visits Bulls, vows he'll play again

Chicago Bulls' Jay Williams walks through the halls of the United Center on crutches before the start of the Bulls' game against the Cleveland Cavaliers Saturday in Chicago. Williams hopes to get back in a Bulls uniform someday after a motorcycle accident put his career in jeopardy.



By Nancy Armour
Associated Press writer

CHICAGO — Jay Williams sat in a chair at the edge of the Chicago Bulls practice court, smiling at the sounds that have carried him through these last six months.

Every bounce of a ball, every screech of a sneaker on hardwood echoes through his head like a siren's call, pushing him to chase his dream. He still can't walk without crutches, and it will likely be summer before he can run again.

But someday soon, Williams promises he'll be back on the court.

"I'm going to come back and play," he said Saturday after watching a Bulls practice for the first time since the devastating motorcycle accident that jeopardized his career.

"That's the motivation, where you want to get back to. This is what I've done my whole life. That's what I look forward to doing again."

Williams is in Chicago this weekend for the first time since being released from the hospital July 2. He visited with his teammates after Saturday morning's shootaround, exchanging a hug with fellow guard and one-time rival Jamal Crawford and checking to see if there was anything left in his old locker.

He'll go to the Bulls' game against Cleveland later Saturday night, and then return Sunday to North Carolina, where he'll continue his rehab at Duke. He hopes to return to Chicago in January for more physical therapy.

"It'll be good to hear the cheers of the Chicago fans again," he said. "But, hopefully, I can hear the cheers after I make a basket on the court sometime soon."

Williams, the No. 2 pick in the 2002 draft, had a promising career ahead of

him when he got on his new motorcycle to go to dinner June 19. He'd just put the powerful street bike in second gear when it got away from him and slammed into a utility pole.

He was thrown onto a grassy curb, face down from the waist up, his left leg tilting grotesquely upward. He'd severed a main nerve in his leg, fractured his pelvis and tore three of the four main ligaments in his left knee.

He spent the next two weeks at a Chicago hospital before being transferred to Duke University Medical Center.

"He's made great progress," said Bob Bruzga, a physical therapist at Duke who accompanied Williams to Chicago. "But the injuries he's had and where he is right now, he's done remarkably well."

But will he ever play in the NBA again?

Though Williams is targeting a return for the 2004-05 season, the Bulls are operating as if he won't.

Though the Bulls could have terminated Williams' deal — riding — a motorcycle — violates — the standard NBA contract — he's currently on injured reserve.

"All that stands in his way is work and time."

Williams does physical therapy for four to five hours a day, five or six days a week. He rides a stationary bike, works out in a pool and does weight training and exercises to improve his balance and endurance.

It's exhausting and, for the foreseeable future, endless. But Williams isn't complaining.

"This has been a life-changing event for me," he said. "I not only make you realize how important some things are that you thought weren't important, but there's a lot of things I took for granted in life."

"It's a different world I'm in now," he added. "I know I have to keep working hard to get back to my dreams, and I'm going to keep working hard for it."

No. 14 Wake Forest upsets No. 4 N. Carolina

Team battles into 3 OT for 119-114 victory

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP) — Eric Williams spoiled Roy Williams' ACC coaching debut, hitting a jumper in the lane with 36 seconds left in the third overtime to lift Wake Forest over North Carolina 119-114.

Williams Gray added 20 points and Justin Gray added 20 for the Demon Deacons (7-0), who earned their first road win against a top-10 team in six years.

Rashad McCants scored 25 points and Raymond Felton added 22 for the Tar Heels (6-1), who have lost five straight games in the series.

No. 1 UConn 104, Iowa 54

HARTFORD, Conn. — Ben Gordon and Emeka Okafor had just about everything covered for Connecticut.

Gordon recorded his first triple-double with 17 points, 16 rebounds and 11 assists to lead the Huskies (8-1) to a 104-54 rout of Iowa on Saturday.

Okafor had 24 points and 10 boards against the Gaels (2-5), who were held to 29 percent shooting.

No. 2 Kentucky 80, Indiana 41

INDIANAPOLIS — Kentucky held Indiana to its lowest point total in nearly 20 years and got 22 points from Chuck Hayes in a blowout.

Bracey Wright had 23 points and Sean Kline 15 for the Hoosiers. The rest of the team combined for three.

No. 3 Duke 89, No. 11 Texas 61

NEW YORK — J.J. Redick had 20 points to lead six players in double figures and Duke beat Texas in front of a pro-Blue Devils crowd at Madison Square Garden.

Chris Duhon had 15 points and nine assists, while Sheldon Williams had 14 points for Duke.

No. 8 Oklahoma 68, Jackson State 46

NORMAN, Okla. — Freshman Drew Lavender scored 23 points and had five assists to lead Oklahoma to a methodical win over Jackson State.

Ishmael Joyce led Jackson State (2-5) with 13 points.

No. 17 Purdue 80, Indiana-Purdue-Fort Wayne 69

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. — Matt Kiefer scored a career-high 23 points in a reserve role to lead Purdue over Indiana-Purdue-Fort Wayne in the first round of the Boilermaker Invitational.

Chris Booker added 18 points for Purdue (8-1), which advanced to play SMU, a 66-55 first-round winner over Miami of Ohio, in the championship Sunday.

No. 19 Syracuse 74, Siena 61

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Hakim Warrick had 24 points and 10 rebounds and Craig Forth added a career-high 14 points to lead Syracuse over Siena.

Michael Haddix led Siena with 19 points and nine rebounds.

No. 20 Louisville 80, Austin Peay 63

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Francisco Garcia scored 21 and Luke Whitehead added 17 points and seven rebounds to lead Louisville to its fifth straight win.

Adrian Henning had 15 points and 11 rebounds to lead the Governors (3-5).

No. 22 Wisconsin 63, No. 23 Marquette 59

MADISON, Wis. — Alando Tucker scored 17 points, including a free throw with 7 seconds

remaining, in Wisconsin's victory over Marquette.

Devin Harris added 15 points for the Badgers (7-1), who overcame a slow start to win their 19th straight home game.

Travis Diener scored 19 points to lead Marquette (7-2).

Washington State 62, Idaho 55

PULLMAN, Wash. — Marcus Moore scored 16 of his season-high 22 points in the second half to lead Washington State past Idaho 62-55 Saturday.

Erzema Ulsengui added 15 points, matching his high in two years at Washington State, and Randy Green scored 13 for the Cougars. The Cougars, who finished 7-20 last season, have won four straight for the first time since December 1998. Tyrone Hayes led Idaho (2-6) with 17 points.

Women

No. 19 Utah 51, Weber St. 38

SALT LAKE CITY — Mandie Little had 15 points and 10 rebounds, and Kelsy Stireman added a season-high 15 points and seven steals for Utah, which won its 21st straight home game.

Little made six of 11 shots and had five of her rebounds on the offensive end to lift the Utes (7-3) to their 21st consecutive home victory. Stireman scored on drives to the basket that stymied

the Wildcats (2-7).

Boise State 90, Utah Valley State College 53

BOISE — Nadia Begay and Cariann Ramirez each scored 14 points to lift the Boise State women (3-5) past Utah Valley State College 90-53, converting 29 points of turnovers. UVSC (4-5) was paced by Liz Kelly with 11 points.



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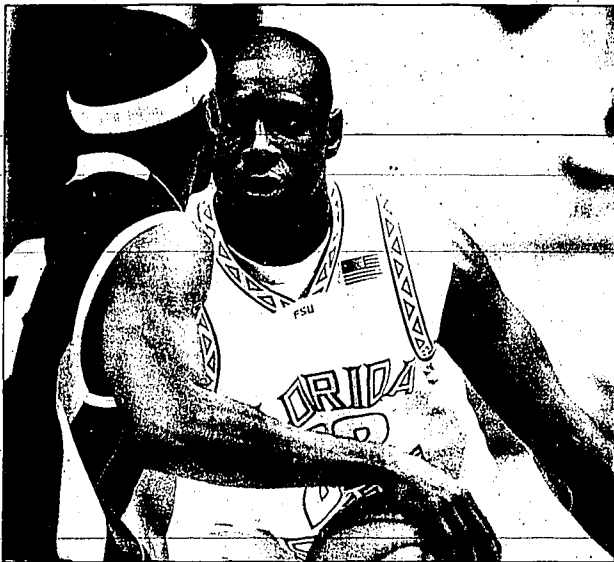
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SPORTS



Florida State's Tim Pickett, right, guards Wagner's Toole Carroll, left, during second-half action, Thursday, in Tallahassee, Fla. FSU defeated Wagner, 83-62, running their record to 9-0. It is the best start in school history.

Seminoles make best start in school history

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) - Coach Leonard Hamilton's suffocating defense and nonstop substitutions have kept Florida State undefeated this season - and given the Seminoles hope of respectability in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

Their 9-0 start is the best in school history and includes victories against teams from the Big East, Big Ten and SEC, along with a handful of wins over inferior competition.

The 1988-89 team led by George McCloud began 8-0 before a one-point loss to Villanova, as did the 1977-78 team before a two-point loss to Cincinnati in coach Hugh Durham's last season at the school.

But Hamilton, in his second season, isn't persuaded his team is ready for prime time just yet.

"What does that mean?" Hamilton asked about their 9-0 record. "It means we've got to win a whole lot more games if we're going to be a team of significance in the ACC or on a national basis."

Florida State hasn't won more than six games in the ACC for the past 11 seasons - that's the barometer Hamilton uses to measure progress.

The coming week will test Hamilton's rebuilding effort with a game Monday at No. 18 Pittsburgh and the ACC opener Dec. 28 against No. 25 Maryland.

The Seminoles have made impressions on their opponents this season, giving up only 55 points a game while limiting the other side to 34.5 percent shooting.

"I've been at Fairleigh Dickinson for 21 years and I haven't seen quite as good man-to-man defense," Fairleigh Dickinson coach Tom Green said after watching his team lose 83-46 earlier this month at Florida State. "They really get after you."

Ten Seminoles are averaging double-digit playing minutes as Hamilton keeps fresh bodies on the court to wear down opponents, a strategy notable in a 67-58 victory at Miami last week when Florida State scored the game's final 13 points.

"As long as we play defense and get after people we feel we've got a chance," said senior point guard Nate Johnson, who has the best assists to turnover ratio in the ACC at 4.62.

Johnson is part of a tandem, sharing his position with jackrabbit-quick sophomore Todd Galloway, who ranks fifth in the league in the same category. The duo gives Hamilton the opportunity to play different styles on offense.

The points come mostly from senior wing Tim Pickett and junior forward Anthony Richardson, the lone two Seminoles to average in double figures.

The catalyst is Pickett, a junior college transfer who led the ACC in steals last year while leading the Seminoles with a 17.1 average that included a pair of 32-point outbursts. He's averaging 15.6 points while playing fewer minutes so far this season.

Richardson, who thrills home crowds with a variety of high-soaring dunks, is averaging 13 points and a team-high 5.4 rebounds.

"Even with Duke, I can't imagine anyone's guards and small forwards being a lot better than they are in terms of shooting," Wagner coach Mike Deane said. "They've got very good athleticism."

But Deane thinks Florida State may not be good enough in the post when they start ACC play.

The best aid so far has been 6-10, 245-pound freshman Alexander Johnson, who is averaging nine points while hitting 75 percent of his shots.

"What we want to do is be

somewhere at the end of the season that we can feel good about,"

Hamilton said. "Right now we're in the middle of the battle."

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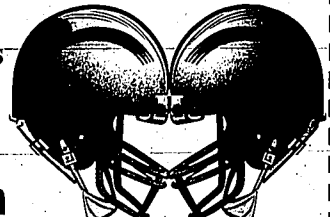
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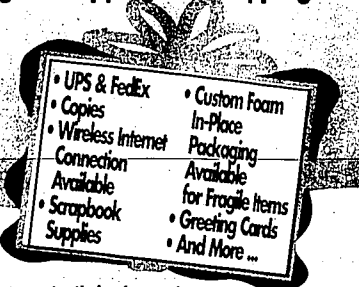


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Saku Koivu's cancer legacy lingers

By Hal Book
Associated Press writer

NEW YORK — Before each game, Saku Koivu straps a brace on his left knee because of an old injury and another on his right knee because of a new one. They are minor inconveniences for the captain of the Montreal Canadiens, nothing compared to what he's already been through.

"You get injured, you get through it," said Koivu, who missed the first 13 games of his season because of the sprained knee. "It's frustrating, but you know you'll get better. But cancer..."

Koivu is a cancer survivor. He is healthy now, his disease in remission, his blood tested regularly. He takes a regular turn on the ice and is a major player for the Canadiens. He is long removed from the flight from Montreal to Canada for the start of training camp two years ago. That's when he began to feel the pain, a stabbing, persistent pain in his back that soon spread to his stomach. By the time the plane landed, Koivu knew this was serious.

The diagnosis was blunt. Koivu had a buildup of fluid in his abdomen caused by non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Suddenly, his world was turned upside down.

Hockey is a tough, demanding sport. Players tear up knees, break bones, get concussions. Those things heal. But this was stomach cancer, an aggressive form of the disease with a 50-50 chance of survival. That is considerably more daunting than a sprain or a strain.

"It took a day to find out, then four of five

more to pin it down," Koivu said. "You can't describe the feeling when you hear. You think it's not happening to you. It took a while to realize what I was facing and what I would have to go through."

Koivu never thought, "Why me?" Instead, he fought back.

"We had a plan of treatment," he said. "My feeling was, 'Let's get going.' My mentality was positive. There was no time to hang my head."

Koivu had eight rounds of aggressive chemotherapy, a draining regimen that left him pale and drawn. His hair fell out. He lost weight. He was no longer a hockey player. He was a cancer patient.

"The chemo was tough," he said. "I felt tired. I lost my appetite. You feel it. The first couple of months, I didn't think of hockey. If I don't play, I don't play."

The priority was to get healthy, to recover and return if he could.

As part of his treatment, he needed a PET scan. The sophisticated imaging device was not available at his hospital in Montreal and he had to travel 100 miles to Sherbrooke, Quebec, for the exam.

That, he decided, would have to change.

Every so often, he would show up at Canadiens practices, maybe take a short skate around the rink at the Molson Centre, a reminder to himself and his team that he was still a part of hockey's most storied franchise, the team of Plante and Richard, Beliveau and Geoffrin, Dryden and Laflair.

He was their captain and it would cheer the team to see him around the rink. "I think it made the players realize and

appreciate what they have," Koivu said. "Their family members being healthy, that is everything."

"I knew there was a chance I wouldn't play again. You put that out of your mind. You say to yourself, 'I will play.'"

And he kept that promise, to himself and to his team.

Koivu missed 79 games that season. He returned in Game No. 80. In a town that takes its hockey seriously, he brought down the house. There was a lengthy standing ovation, a tribute to the courage of the captain.

"It was very emotional," he said. "I was nervous and happy at the same time. I got chills. It was so overwhelming."

In Game No. 81, the Canadiens scored two goals, both on assists by Koivu. In the playoffs, he was the team's leading scorer with 12 points in 10 games. Last season, he played every game and led the team in scoring with 21 goals and 50 assists, both career highs.

Rarely does a day go by when Koivu does not think about what he went through.

"The cancer was a huge part of my life," he said. "It made me see life differently. I have to live my life as fully as I can."

Part of that involves assuring that cancer patients at Montreal General Hospital, don't have to make that trip to Sherbrooke. The Koivu Foundation is raising \$2.5 million toward the cost of a PET Scan device for the hospital. "We are \$200,000, maybe \$300,000 away," he said.

It will be the legacy of one grateful survivor.



Montreal Canadiens Saku Koivu scrambles for the puck as New York Rangers Mark Messier follows during the third period of their game Dec. 20 at Madison Square Garden in New York.

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Making The Case for Dairy

A Look Back at 2003

As 2003 winds down and we prepare for a new year, planning for the future is a bit easier when we know where we've been.

As we take a look back at the dairy industry's accomplishments over the past 12 months, it's clear that the dairy producers of Idaho continued with their commitment of remaining proactive when addressing issues involving their livelihoods. Dairywomen and men held strong during some of the industry's toughest economic times to help keep Idaho's economy moving forward. Idaho's dairy farmers continued to be responsible stewards of Idaho lands while producing one nature's perfect food. Here's a few brief summaries of the year's high points.

- After 18 months of the lowest prices in history, the dairy industry saw some relief as cheese and class 3 prices moved up. As cheese and class 3 prices hedge their way up, dairy producers are able to help contribute more to the state's economy by continue paying their bills as well as update facilities by modernizing milking barns or waste treatment operations. Ultimately, the dairy farmers are able to put more money back into the local economies. Past economic studies show that the 70 percent of the money dairy farmers spend on supplies and upgrades stay in the community. In other words, an increase in income at the dairy equates to an increase in the local economy.
- The new program devised by national dairy federation to help bring the dairy industry's supply and demand in balance made great strides during 2003. So much so that there is some consideration of extending CWT Program into the year to come. The premise of the program is to encourage efforts intended to stimulate dairy purchases at all

- points in the food distribution chain while helping the management of the milk supply and the domestic inventory of dairy products in order to align milk production with consumption. This innovated program is completely driven by volunteer participation of the dairy farmers and funded by the same. This means that there is absolutely no involvement by the government or taxpayers. More on this in the coming months.
- Because Idaho's dairy farmers have made a commitment to ensuring the health of the environment, the industry as a whole this past year has continued looking into ways to improve on waste management. Some of those avenues under consideration include the pursuit of grants for anaerobic digesters; new innovative technologies for waste management and order control, and voluntary participation in the University of Idaho's order study. This means that the Idaho dairy industry continues to be proactive to address issues related to this very viable industry.
- On the legislative front the dairy industry had 40 percent of the members of the Idaho Senate along with 60 percent of the House of Representatives voted with the dairy industry 100 percent of the time. That means the message is getting across that people understand how importance the dairy industry is to Idaho and the importance of keeping the industry viable in the state.
- Keeping America's healthy was another issue the dairy industry tackled with the launch of the 3-A-Day of Dairy. This is an educational program dairy producers are using to help spread the good word about the benefits of consuming three servings of milk, cheese or yogurt each day. While the majority of Americans think they're get-



ting enough calcium in their daily diets, they're not. In fact, research shows that Americans consume an average of only 1.5 servings of dairy foods a day, and most are not meeting the number of recommended servings. Now, dairy producers, through their check off program, are spearheading efforts to address the nation's calcium crisis through the 3-A-Day of Dairy program. The producer checkoff-funded 3-A-Day of Dairy nutrition-based marketing and education program aims to raise consumer awareness of dairy's role in meeting daily calcium needs through trade and consumer advertising, retail promotions, public relations and health professional outreach, and other local efforts throughout Idaho. The cornerstone of the program is the 3-A-Day of Dairy logo. By the end of the year, more than one billion dairy products across the country will feature the logo, which identifies them as 'excellent' sources of calcium. The Idaho dairy farmers appreciate the opportunity they have had over the past 12 months to work and live in the great state of Idaho. These hard-working men and women also look forward to opportunities that lie ahead in 2004. Enjoy the upcoming holidays with a cold, delicious glass of milk. See you in 2004.

Information provided by the United Dairywomen of Idaho and the Milk Producers of Idaho.

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INSIDE

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Business Editor: Virginia S. Hutchins 733-0931, Ext. 242

The Times-News

Sunday, December 21, 2003

Section D

Big Fact

Disney on top

U.S. box office receipts for top studios, January 1992 to October 2003 (market share):

Disney	\$16.8 billion (16%)
Warner Bros.	\$15.8 billion (14%)
Sony	\$15.4 billion (14%)
Paramount	\$13.9 billion (12%)
Universal	\$12.2 billion (12%)

Source: *Box Office Mojo*, *Box Office Mojo.com*

BRIEFLY IN MONEY

CSI offers workshop on managing money

TWIN FALLS — The College of Southern Idaho will offer the new money-management workshop "Money Matters and Power of Time" between 7 and 9 p.m. on Jan. 21, in Shields 104 on the CSI campus. Cost of the workshop will only be \$10, and the instructor is Stephen Nelson. In the workshop, students will discover what they can do to build up their nest eggs for their golden years by starting to compound interest early, class organizers said. Basic tactics will be discussed, including Roth and traditional IRAs, mutual funds, college education savings plans and risk management. For information or to register, call 732-6290 or 732-6288.

American Airlines increases fuel surcharge

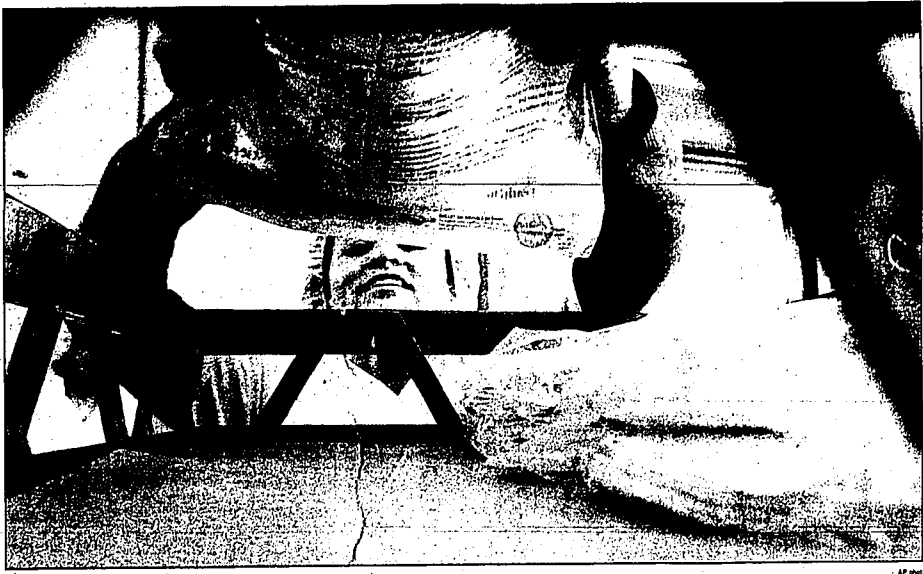
American Airlines Inc. liked the fuel surcharge on all tickets Friday in hopes of persuading its competitors to match. A \$10 surcharge — essentially a one-way ticket fare increase — has been in place since February, when the onset of the Gulf War inflated oil prices. American flipped the surcharge to \$13 on one-way flights, making the total surcharge \$26 on round-trip flights within the United States and in Canada. As with any increase in fares, this one won't stick unless the major airlines agree. Carriers have tried to push through several fare hikes lately without success, analysts say, clouding the outlook for American's latest effort. Northwest Airlines Inc. said on Friday it had not matched the surcharge increase. Northwest's unwillingness to go along with other airfare increases in the past has spelled the end of the efforts by other carriers. American's fuel costs have gone up sharply as the price of crude oil has stayed above \$30 a barrel. American paid 74 cents per gallon of jet fuel in June, said spokesman Al Becker. Now it pays 90 cents per gallon, and every penny increase adds \$30 million to the carrier's annual fuel costs. Fuel is any airline's second-biggest expense, behind labor. Some airlines use financial markets to buy their fuel needs ahead of time at predetermined prices, American does this as well, but only for a portion of its fuel needs. Shares of American parent AMR Corp. fell 13 cents to \$12.80 Friday.

Star employees can struggle after losing jobs

You're a rock star at the office — competent, organized, well-liked. Then the job disappears and you flop like a beached bass when it comes to finding a new one. Such is a common problem for star employees coping with the harsh reality of a corporate restructuring, according to a New Jersey-based career management services company. "They understand their jobs and their companies' needs so well they tend to be a step ahead. Once they are thrust into the job hunt, however, they are out of their element," said Bernadette Kenny, an executive vice president of Lee Hecht Harrison. "They must not only deal with the feelings and fears that come with job loss, but they also have to take on a task — looking for work — they have neither the framework for nor the desire to do." As a result, it's wise to turn the job search into a work task — map measurable goals and plot how to achieve them. Compiled from staff and wire reports

'I don't know what they use them for, but people love them'

Tortilla time



Borta Moreno stacks tortillas in crates for delivery at La Colonial Tortillas Nov. 25 in San Jose, Calif. At its current rate of growth, the tortilla will surpass white bread as the top-selling bread in the United States by the end of this decade. The growth of tortilla sales marks a dramatic shift in U.S. culture and culinary tastes.

Sales may surpass white bread by end of decade

The Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Move over, white bread. Make way for the bread of the future: the tortilla. At its current rate of growth, the tortilla will surpass white bread as the top-selling bread in the United States by the end of this decade. The torrid growth of tortilla sales marks a dramatic shift in U.S. culture and culinary tastes. "It's so universal to use," said Manny Berber, president of MI Rancho, a tortilla company in San Leandro, Calif., with 150 employees. "There are more choices when you use a tortilla.

MI Rancho, which sells to restaurants both in the San Francisco Bay area and nationally, has found overall tortilla sales to be robust despite the slowdown in the Bay Area economy. Sales are doing well for tortillas marketed by private-label companies as well as specialty flavors ranging from chili tomato to spinach, he said. Nationally, tortilla sales have grown steadily by just under 10 percent a year and are expected to hit \$6.4 billion next year, according to the Tortilla Industry Association. That may sound slow by tech standards, but it has doubled the size of the industry since 1996. According to the associa-

tion, tortillas have 32 percent of the market for all types of bread, compared with 34 percent for white bread. And the tortilla market is heating up fast. While super-market sales of white bread dropped 0.6 percent in 2002 from the year before, tortilla sales grew 11 percent, according to market research company IRI. Private-label tortilla sales jumped a whopping 26 percent. Tortilla sales are catching on even on the East Coast, according to the Dallas-based association. Sales have been strongest in the Southwest and far West. George Robles is president of La Colonial in San Jose, one

of a dozen medium-size tortilla baking companies in the Bay Area. A second-generation tortilla maker, he has bought automated equipment to keep his company turning out flour tortillas for 30 different sellers. "Our sales have been steady," he said. The traditional corn tortilla is the basic bread of Mexico. But the flour tortilla became widely used when "wrap" sandwiches caught on as a new fast food, and they now sell slightly more than the corn tortilla. The plain white flour tortilla has turned into a rainbow of colors: the reddish sun-dried tomato, the green spinach-flavored tortilla, even a dark-

brown chocolate tortilla. "I don't know what they use them for, but people love them," Leo Jimenez, 73, said of the chocolate tortillas made by his Fort Worth company, Leo's Foods. "We try to give customers what they want — within reason." A few large national manufacturers — such as Mission, a subsidiary of Gruma based in Mexico, and Bimbo Bakeries, also a subsidiary of a Mexican company — dominate the sales to the large supermarkets. At the same time, a dozen small-to-medium-size local companies fight to compete by selling to distributors for their own label or restaurants.

Ski resorts utilize technology to boost profits

Software helps groom slopes, prevent fraud

The Associated Press

DENVER — Ski resorts traditionally have been about as high-tech as snow and mountains, relying more on Mother Nature than motherboards to lure skiers. But the industry has schussed into the digital age during the past decade. From on-mountain digital displays that supply updated weather, terrain and high-way conditions to snowmaking machines controlled from laptops, ski resorts are becoming increasingly wired. Resorts use technology to groom slopes, market special deals, book reservations, find lost skiers, train workers and give lessons. Lift-line employees armed with high-tech scanners help prevent ticket fraud, while advanced software helps ensure a quick, smooth ride up the mountain. Some resorts have devices available for rent to skiers that track such data as average speed and distance. While snowfall remains key to a successful season, ski resorts, like most businesses, have discovered that technology has a direct effect on the bottom line. And it will only play a larger role in the future. "Technology at ski resorts really has kind of cascaded in the time since 1994 or 1995, and the rate of change continues to accelerate," said Michael Berry, president of the National Ski Areas Association in Denver. "The software people are just as important



Michael Broermann, right, uses a scanner to check the lift ticket of a skier at Vail Mountain Ski Resort in Vail, Colo., Dec. 4. The ski industry has schussed into the digital age during the past decade.

now as the wrench people." The industry actually pioneered one major technological innovation: the chairlift. Several U.S. ski resorts began operating chairlifts in the mid-1930s, ushering in the ski industry of today. A major advancement came 20 years ago when resorts began installing lifts that slow when people get on or off and speed up in between. That allowed resorts to get

people up the mountain more quickly, meaning they could handle more skiers daily. Since then, resorts have implemented a variety of high-tech software and programs to better manage lifts. Some resorts have networked all lifts, allowing workers to monitor braking information, lift speed and other data from a central computer. Resorts can spot problems immediately and dispatch a technician, or even fix a lift,

from their computers. In fact, the days when a skier frequently sat swaying 20 feet high on a stalled chairlift are almost a thing of the past. "One of the big advances is in the computing power of the brains of our ski lifts," said CA Lane, director of mountain operations at Winter Park ski resort. "We have the ability to monitor numerous (aspects) of the lift, which makes them safer and more efficient." Ski resorts entered the digital age in the mid-1990s and have rapidly adopted technology since then. Technology has cut costs, pushed up profits and allowed resorts to market more effectively. For consumers, technology has made skiing more convenient, and it has given skiers access to a wealth of information about where to go and how much to spend. "Technology has become such a big part of ski resorts that consumers have come to expect it now," said Peter Hoskins, vice president of marketing and sales for Avon-based Resort Technology Partners, a 6-year-old company that designs operations management software for the industry. Resorts initially entered the high-tech world using automated reservation and financial systems. In the mid-1990s, they began developing Internet sites and installing Web cameras that broadcast snapshots of lift lines and weather conditions. "As an analyst, it was wonderful to see the lift-line capacity on the mountain cameras," said Dennis McAlpine, who follows Vail Resorts Inc. for Scarsdale, N.Y.-based McAlpine Associates. "If there was no one

YOUR BUSINESS

CAREER MOVES

Mary Fox

TWIN FALLS - Mary Fox was hired at First Federal as the retail operations supervisor for the bank's main office.

Originally from Salt Lake City, Fox has a degree in business and marketing from the University of Utah. She has been in the banking industry since 1977 and has worked in various areas of banking since then.

Fox moved to Twin Falls in 2001 and is married with one son.



Mary Fox



Gina Atkins, chairwoman, and **Debra Drake**, member, Marketing Committee, Summer Bolsvert, chairwoman, Membership Committee, Jill Stone, chairwoman, and **Betty Stimpson**, member, Awards and Recognition Committee, Backus, chairwoman; Hospitality Committee, Gerry Turner, chairwoman; and Nominating Committee, Nikki Boyd, chairwoman.

Jeffery D. Baldwin

RUPERT - Southern Idaho Therapy Services in Rupert and Jerome announced the association of **Jeffery D. Baldwin**.



Baldwin received a master's degree in physical therapy from Idaho State University in 1999 and a master's degree in exercise physiology from the University of Arizona in 1990. He has practiced in outpatient, inpatient and skilled-nursing settings and will serve the Mini-Cassia area.

He comes from Idaho Falls and will move his wife, Kall, and their two children to the area as soon as possible.

Southern Idaho Therapy Services is at 1224 Eighth St., Suite A, in Rupert; the number is 436-9016. The Jerome office is at 128 Fifth Ave. W.; the number is 324-3090.

Chamber board leaders

BURLEY - The Mini-Cassia Chamber of Commerce board elected 2004 officers during its annual November retreat.

Mavis Brice of Advantage 1 Realty, currently first vice president, will take the president position. **Diane Newman** of the Burley Inn was elected to the first vice president position, and **Gary Bartomeo** of Donnelly Sports was chosen for second vice president.

Walt Appell

JEROME - In September, the city's **Walt Appell** was chosen Operator of the Year by the Intermountain Section of American Water Works Association. He was chosen Operator of the Year by the Idaho Rural Water Association in 2002.

Appell is state certified as a distribution II water operator and in cross connection control. He is working with Jerome's mayor, City Council, city administrator and city attorney to replace the existing ordinance for cross connection, making it more enforceable to ensure clean drinking water for the city.

Appell started with the city in November 1991. He does the regular water sampling and the water sampling for new construction.

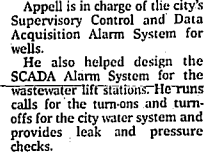
He maintains, repairs, oversees and troubleshoots the city's five wells. When the maintenance or repair is beyond his capabilities, he works with vendors getting replacement parts and any needed bids.

Appell is in charge of the city's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Alarm System for wells.

He also helped design the SCADA Alarm System for the wastewater lift stations. He runs calls for the turn-ons and turn-offs for the city water system and provides leak and pressure checks.

Harold Hergenreder

TWIN FALLS - Harold Hergenreder of Twin Falls graduated Nov. 20 from Professional Truck Driving School. He acquired his tankers, hazardous materials and doubles-triples endorsements and a Class A commercial driver's license.



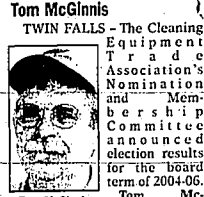
Harold Hergenreder works for S & G Produce.

Tom McGinnis

TWIN FALLS - The Cleaning Equipment Trade Association's Nominating and Membership Committee announced election results for the board term of 2004-06.

Tom McGinnis of the Stream Store of Magic Valley was elected to the industry association's board in the distributor category.

Elected officials took their positions at PowerClean 2003 in Nashville, Tenn., during CETAs annual membership and business meeting.



Tom McGinnis

MILESTONES

Magic Valley Towing employee wins award

TWIN FALLS - Hazel Lewis of Magic Valley Towing received the American Towman ACE Award for service performance. Recipients were nominated by the nation's major motor clubs and dispatch centers.

Nomination guidelines include percentage of calls when the estimated time of arrival is achieved; consistency in response time; written appreciation from customers; and percentage of calls serviced instead of turning them away.

ACE recipients rank in the top 1 percent of the towing industry's service providers, promoters said.

The ACE Award is presented by American Towman Magazine, a trade publication for emergency road services.

The ACE Award was commended during a ceremony Nov. 23 at the American Towman Exposition, a trade show and convention for emergency road service providers, in Baltimore, Md. The ceremony was co-sponsored by Cross Country Automotive Services, GEICO Direct, Coach-Net and Road America.



Debbie Knopp

Mark Ginsberg, the association's executive director, said in a statement. "By earning accreditation, Discovery Days Daycare has become a leader in a national effort to raise the quality of early childhood education, and to help give all children a better start."

To earn accreditation, a program conducts a self-study to determine how well it meets the association's standards. Necessary improvements are made, the program is observed by independent, professional validators, then reviewed by a national panel. Programs are accredited for a five-year period.

Discovery Days "is the first independently owned center in our region to reach such status," said **Tiffany Eden**, the College of Southern Idaho's NAEYC accreditation project coordinator.

She said Magic Valley's other accredited centers are CST's early childhood education lab, and South Central Head Start centers in Burley, Halley, Shoshone, Wendell, Twin Falls, Jerome, Hansen and Bull.

"The College of Southern Idaho NAEYC accreditation project began with a grant from J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation," Eden said. "Currently we are working with three other early childhood centers going through the NAEYC accreditation self-study process."

PMT returns over \$150,000 to community

RUPERT - Project Mutual Telephone, a member-owned cooperative based in Rupert since 1916, is distributing annual patronage to members this month.

PMT returned over \$150,000 to members starting Dec. 1 - up from



\$128,000 - last year. This year's checks represent patronage payments from 1987 and 5 percent of the 2002 allocation.

Allocation for members is based on the dollar amounts of their usage. Their percents of usage, times the net operating margin, equal their patronage allocations. PMT will mail patronage checks ranging from \$5 to \$1,300 this year. Members who have current billing relationships and whose patronage checks are less than \$5 received credits on Dec. 1 statements.

"We are very proud to be able to continue returning patronage to our membership this year; it is a proud tradition at PMT," Chairman **Jeffrey B. Clark** said. "We also want to thank all of our members for their support. Members guarantee PMT's success, and give the company the opportunity to return dollars back to the community."

PMT now provides dial tone to 11,500 telephone lines, signal to 3,300 cable television circuits and Internet access to over 6,000 customers throughout Magic Valley.

A.G. Edwards report outlines 2004 strategies

TWIN FALLS - A new A.G. Edwards report outlines investment conditions and strategies for the coming year, the investment firm said.

The economy has turned the corner and posted above-average growth, and equity markets are poised to finish the year in positive territory after three years of decline. These upbeat trends are expected to continue through 2004, but investors will need to cast a wary eye toward the possibility of rising inflation, according to the year-end report prepared by investment strategists at A.G. Edwards.

Investors interested in reading the report titled "2004 Economic Outlook and Market Strategy" may obtain a free copy by calling a local branch office at 733-6019 or viewing it online at www.agedwards.com.

Association leaders

TWIN FALLS - The south-central Idaho chapter of the Women's Council of Realtors announced these leaders for 2004:

• **Betty Veeh** is president for 2004. She is serving as president-elect in 2003.

Veeh has been in real estate for 26 years. She has GRI, CRS and ABR designations and co-owns Irwin Realty.

• **Tonya Backus** is president-elect for 2004. She has been a Realtor since 1997 and is co-owner of Magic Valley Realty. Backus earned her GRI designation and is serving on the Multiple Listing Service board as a director.

• **Debra Drake** will be secretary for 2004. Drake served in the same position in 2003. She has been in the financial aspect of the real estate industry since 1986.

• **Jill Stone** will serve as past president. She was president-elect in 2002 and president in 2003. She has been in the real estate profession for 27 years.

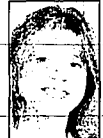
The local chapter's other leaders: **Education and Program Committee**, Rhonda Bolsvert, chairwoman, and Veeh, member; **Ways and Means Committee**,



Betty Veeh



Tonya Backus



Debra Drake

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR A NEEDY FAMILY



Employees at CableONE adopted a needy family through The Salvation Army. Here, Nancy Darling, Mary Jenkins and Shawn Monroe wrap presents for the family. "We are hoping that maybe this will inspire someone else to lend a hand this holiday season," said Melissa Crane, the company's marketing manager.

Ten years later ...

Galena Lodge grows in popularity after avoiding the wrecking ball. Thursday in Outdoors



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- New certifications.
- Seminars and workshops.
- Awards and achievements.
- Charitable business activities.
- Other business news.

Please e-mail items to Business Editor Virginia S. Hitehins at virginia@magvalley.com

Or contact her at: The Times-News, PO Box 548, Twin Falls, Idaho 83303, 733-0931, Ext. 242 Fax: 737-4543 or 734-5538

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2003 proved one for the books

Ag Weekly

TWIN FALLS — It was a year of extremes for Magic Valley farmers and ranchers, marked by another challenging water year, an effort by dairymen to manage production and the best cattle market in history.

Those record-high prices — as much as \$100 a hundredweight — had catlemen smiling from ear to ear, but there were still some ups and downs. A single incident of bovine spongiform encephalopathy in Canada closed the border and drove prices up, but the industry also had to put out fires with foreign buyers concerning U.S. beef that could be intermingled with Canadian product. In addition, country-of-origin labeling divided the industry and not everyone is thrilled with new grazing rules.

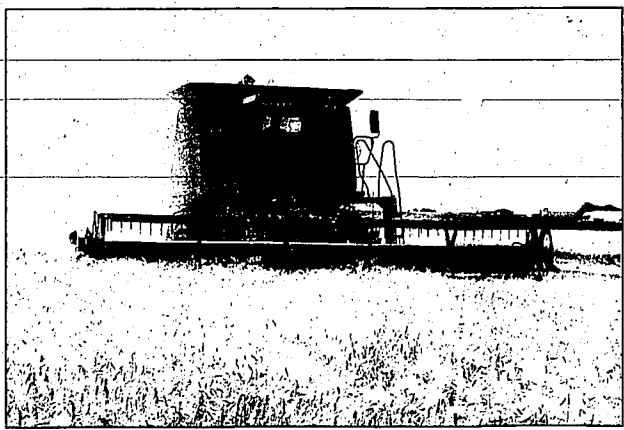
For irrigators who rely on the Snake River for their water supply, 2003 was a respectable year.

"We started at five-eighths-of-an-inch and we concluded at five-eighths-of-an-inch with just a few hiccups along the way," said Vince Alberdi, general manager of the Twin Falls Canal Company. "We hope we can do a repeat next year." Five-eighths-of-an-inch is a full water share on the Twin Falls tract.

Dan Temple, manager of the A&B Irrigation District in Rupert, said the district squeaked by in 2003 and kept everyone wet, but he is concerned about 2004. Given past experience with drought and water levels on the district he knows that the water table will drop again even with a good snowpack because of the lag between precipitation and recharge to the aquifer. Water levels in the district's deep wells dropped 3-1/2-foot last year.

According to the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service hydrologists, a stream flow of 100 percent of average is needed in 2004 to provide adequate irrigation-water for the Salmon Tract, south of Twin Falls, and that means a snow pack of 120 percent of normal on April 1. "For the 2003 water year, a 59 percent of average snowpack equated a 35 percent of normal snow flow and caused the irrigation season to end earlier than normal."

Norm Semanko, director of the Idaho Water Users Association, said the drought is the No. 1 issue facing water users in that state and the drought is also playing a role in the legal issues facing water users.



Farmers and ranchers reaped rewards and suffered loss in 2003. Cattlemen experienced the highest cattle prices ever, but farmers struggled with a strained water supply and dairymen tried to recover from a long stretch of low prices.

Farmbeat

Highlights of this week's Ag Weekly, The Times-News' weekly report on agriculture.

He points to the fight between spring users and ground-water users in the Thousand Springs area as one example. If the two sides can't come to an agreement about what's appropriate mitigation, the courts will become involved.

"It's not going to be easy," Semanko said. Grain growers were among those affected by limited irrigation water.

"In terms of what got accomplished legislatively, it was a good year," said Steve Johnson, director of the Idaho Grain Producers Association. "In terms of production and dealing with the drought, it was a difficult year, it was a tough year."

Kelly Olson, administrator for the Idaho Barley Commission, said barley producers in irrigated regions of the state came out of the 2003 growing season okay, but producers in the dryland regions struggled.

"Growers rose to the occasion and did everything possible to manage their crop," Olson said. She also thinks growers are becoming savvy about covering their own risks by using crop insurance and opportunities to forward price their crop.

In the aquaculture arena, Linda Lemmon, executive director for the Idaho Aquaculture Association, gives 2003 a near failing grade, given the continuation of both low prices and extremely tight water supplies.

"Aquaculture in Idaho is just getting worse and worse," Lemmon said.

She said she believes one step toward improving aquaculture's situation would be if the conflict between spring users and ground-water pumpers is resolved so that everyone shares the same risk during droughts.

Dairymen suffered through a drought of another nature. A long run of low prices saw them reeling in 2003, with suppliers being taken along for the spin. Producers nationwide took matters into their own hands and mounted an effort to manage production, launching the Cooperatives Working Together Program.

Prices rebounded some this summer, but the industry also struggled with environmental

challenges, growing divisiveness in communities and legal threats. Sheep producers welcomed better prices in both lamb and wool markets. Wool was up by a \$1 a pound, and a worldwide shortage of lamb strengthened prices for lamb growers. Drought saw early closures on some grazing allotments and led to a lighter-weight crop.

Potato growers' efforts to cut supply paid off somewhat, but closure of the Simplot plant in Heyburn was a tough blow. Increased Canadian processing and imports of Canadian product also hurt, but the industry also saw opportunity in exports with efforts continuing to expand those markets.

Beet growers saw a good production year with increased tonnage and the hope of recouping past losses. The government threw the industry a curve in August, however, when it announced much higher sugar allotments than the industry had expected. In September, the industry corrected its levels, but the damage had already been done.

Overall, efforts across most commodities to manage production and make the most of limited water did pay off, making 2003 a year where producers held their own.

Job seekers look to put best face forward

Plastic surgeons give applicants an edge

Newsday

Some people turn to career coaches or resume doctors for help finding jobs. Others join networking groups to locate new clients. And then there are those who seek out plastic surgeons to give them an edge. Brian Bretan has no one to thank that he's run out of steam. The 59-year-old job seeker from Smithtown, N.Y., has had doctors remove the bags under his eyes, give him a futuristic hair and reverse his age spots. Now, he said, "I like the way I look." He's had two job interviews for pharmaceutical sales positions in the past couple of weeks, and expects to have at least two more in the coming weeks. His confidence is high given that these are his first interviews in more than 30 years, "I haven't hit any disasters yet," he said.

A dicey job market, a growing number of age discrimination complaints and what many perceive as employers' preference for younger thinkers is making some people rethink how they should look while they're looking. Some job seekers fight age discrimination by bringing gym bags to interviews. Others fight discrimination with a knife. Eyelid surgeries, for example, jump 44

percent to 104,426 between 2000 to 2001 for people ages 51 and 64, according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. This procedure, which accounts for nearly one-third of all cosmetic procedures for the 51-to-64 age group, is especially popular among older job seekers, plastic surgeons say. The average cost for eyelid surgery was \$2,544, according to the plastic surgeons group.

Plastic surgery is just one route to youthful looks. Sales for hair coloring formula just for men has double-digit growth has become a "run of the mill" thing. And an increasing number of people are whitening their teeth, going to gyms and tanning for professional, rather than personal, reasons.

Botox injections, used to reduce wrinkles around the eyes, have grown dramatically, jumping 61 percent from 2000 to 2001, to 191,150 nationwide. Dr. Bruce J. Nadler, who reduced the bags under Bretan's eyes, said getting plastic surgery for professional reasons has become "run of the mill." People get Botox injections in their early 20s, eyelid surgeries in their late 30s, and in their 40s visit Nadler to reduce the wrinkles around their eyes and to tighten the skin around their jaws and neck.

Professional reasons are edging out personal ones for cosmetic surgery, he said. Nadler estimates that eyelid surgeries at his prac-

tices jumped 20 percent in the last couple of years, largely because of the tougher competition for jobs.

Women have traditionally spent more money to look youthful. But in a tight job market, men are taking it upon themselves to update their looks. Roughly 20 percent of cosmetic surgeries were done on men in 2001, up from 14 percent in 1992, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons says.

Both men and women find themselves increasingly at a disadvantage when they reach 50, or even 40. Age discrimination charges filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission jumped 41 percent since 1999, to 19,921 in 2002. A quarter of the allegations were about hiring.

The job market looks dismal to the unemployed. More than 300,000 people nationwide joined their ranks in February, bringing the U.S. unemployment rate to 5.8 percent.

Nationwide, the unemployment rate for people 50 and older is 4.3 percent. But this does not take into account those who have slipped into retirement, convinced that they can no longer find work. Nor does it count those who have taken "survival jobs" below their professional qualifications, but still seek something better.

Jonathan Rosen, who heads the membership-based New York

Unemployment Project on Wall Street, said, "Age discrimination is absolutely rampant," as are other forms of discrimination. The weak economy gives employers more flexibility, and they're taking advantage of it, he said. The unemployed workers he's seen cannot afford plastic surgery. But they suffer from the same lack of confidence as their more affluent counterparts.

No wonder so many men are coloring their hair or brightening their teeth.

"Guys are out looking for work, and turning to us for a solution," said John Lerch, Combe's chief advertising officer. Combe Inc., based in White Plains, N.Y., sells just for men. "Our business is up fairly dramatically in the last two years," Lerch said. The company tries to specifically reach job seekers in a quarter of its ads. The Just for Men Web site, www.justfor-men.com, warns that appearance is a "decisive employment factor."

Jim Wallis said his teeth, rather than his hair, needed burnishing. As president of business consulting firm Relational Engineering on Wall Street, he said getting new customers keeps his business afloat. When an especially important sales meeting came up, he called his dentist to whiten his teeth. "Each new work order is significant," he said. "It's about appearance and good presentation."

Barter becomes more crucial for businesses

Knight Ridder News Service

hotel is doing 35 percent more

SAN JOSE, Calif. — To get her doggie daycare business up and running, Dyana Klein needed to hire an accountant to do her bookkeeping and a programmer to build a software system. But like most new entrepreneurs, she was short on cash. "In May," she put an ad in the back section of a Craigslist, one of the Bay Area's largest online community bulletin boards. Now, Klein is getting \$25,000 worth of services in exchange for doggie daycare.

"I would not be able to afford them without the trade. God, no," said Klein, laughing with obvious delight. Her business, Run 'Em Ragged Doggie Daycare, opened in August. "When you're starting a new business, you have to try to save every dollar you can."

An increasing number of entrepreneurs like Klein — as well as florists, hoteliers and plumbers — are making barter a part of their business model. From barter exchanges to informal networks, the world's oldest form of trade is helping to buy businesses in Silicon Valley and around the nation as they weather an ailing economy.

And barter, which has had a reputation as an underground economy where goods and services are traded untaxed, is coming into its own. The barter world boasts at least 600 above-ground barter exchanges worldwide — half of them in the United States. The International Reciprocal Trade Association in Rochester, N.Y., estimates the worldwide barter industry, in which formal exchanges broker deals between businesses, to be about \$8 billion in 2001. But other estimates put U.S. barter alone at \$12 billion a year.

What's certain is that barter exchanges locally and in the United States report greater trade volume and higher membership numbers the past two years as the economy hit the doldrums. At Sacramento, Calif.-based Ilex, the nation's largest barter exchange, members are conducting 30 percent more trades with one another. Meanwhile, Master Trade of Los Gatos, Calif., has seen its membership rise 25 percent. The 71-year-old local exchange has 700 member businesses.

Small businesses, from mom-and-pop shops to firms with less than 10 employees, make up the vast majority of participants on exchanges.

"When the economy is rough going, people are naturally looking for alternative ways to conserve their cash," said Krista Vardabach, executive director of International Reciprocal Trade Association. "We definitely see an increase of trade in things that have a shelf-life, like restaurants, travel, and hotels. If they're not being used, they're gone for good and the owners make nothing."

Take San Jose's Park Plaza Hotel, for example. General manager Chris Billawala said the

business in trade compared with two years ago because of more empty rooms. Within the last year, he's purchased about \$20,000 in goods and services, including print advertising and printing, without plunking down cash. Just a few months ago, he ordered \$6,000 worth of mouse pads with the hotel's picture and logo. "We would not have gotten the mouse pads if we had to pay cash for it," said Billawala.

In its simplest form, barter is a trade of goods or services between two companies. By joining a barter exchange, participants don't need to do a direct business-to-business transaction. Members can request to "purchase" services from anyone in the exchange. The value of the transaction is based on the retail value of the product or service. When the trade occurs, the "purchaser" or recipient incurs a negative trade-balance that is paid off by providing its product or service to other members.

Meanwhile, the "seller" accrues credit for the transaction and can spend it at other businesses in the exchange. The barter exchange makes money by charging annual and monthly fees. For each trade, it's also paid 6 percent to 10 percent of the retail value in cash.

A typical exchange might include small businesses from automotive shops to printers to optometrists — and companies with excess office products.

Since the downturn, however, membership among bigger corporations — who trade millions of dollars at a time — is on the rise, said Ilex Chief Operating Officer Alan Zimmelman.

"Reputable, recognizable businesses like Marriott, Hyatt and Sizzler are getting into the barter act," Zimmelman said. The presence of big-name companies on the exchanges has helped "the barter world become more legitimized," he said.

Zimmelman, who has worked nearly two decades in the industry, is quick to acknowledge that barter-by-night operations and others who saw the cashless trade as a way to dodge paying taxes.

In 1982, the IRS began to recognize barter exchanges as legal third-party record keepers, much like banks and brokerages. The IRS is required to report to the exchanges transactions totaling more than \$600. The rule also allowed bartered goods and services that are bona fide business expenses to be fully tax-deductible.

The part of the barter landscape that's completely uncaptured by the industry and the government are informal barter networks, which thrive on the Internet through sites like Craigslist and person-to-person networking. Since Craigslist started the barter category in the Bay Area in mid-2000, the number of monthly postings has increased eightfold to more than 9,000.

Ski

Continued from D1

In line, you'd get something that the resort wasn't doing too well." Steamboat Ski & Resort invested \$6 million during the past decade to develop its online reservation engine. Last year, it debuted a service that lets skiers book flights, hotel rooms, lift tickets and events in the city through its Web site. To see the more tangible

impact technology has made at ski resorts, look to the slopes.

Early in the season, resorts use software and satellite technology to more accurately layer their slopes with snow.

"The snowmaking operation now has the ability to control the flow of air and water using technology that tells us where to make snow and where not to make snow," said Doug Feely, vice president of information technol-

ogy for Intrawest Colorado, which owns and operates several resorts in the state.

An increasing number of resorts use plastic ski passes with embedded computer chips. The passes, about the size of a credit card, are scanned at lift lines by devices equipped to scan radio frequencies.

Instead of visually verifying the authenticity of every ticket, workers simply scan the plastic card,

and the device confirms whether it is valid.

Skiers can even charge a ticket to the pass while they're in the lift line, allowing them to completely bypass the ticket counter.

"In effect, the cash register has moved from the ticket window to the scanner at the base of the mountain at chairlifts," said Bill Jensen, chief operating officer for Vail and Beaver Creek resorts.

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MONEY

IPO market pins hopes on Google

Much-anticipated event could bring back lost luster

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — After three years of fear and loathing, are investors ready to embrace the initial public offerings of leading startups again? As they do with so many other things in modern life, lots of people are counting on Google to supply the answer.

The maker of world's most popular Internet search engine is widely expected to make its stock market debut during the first half of 2004, creating a level of excitement rarely seen since the dot-com gold rush turned Silicon Valley into the mother lode of IPO ecstasy and agony.

If the IPO market recaptures some of its lost luster in the coming year, the nation's recovering economy might just back in the aftermath.

That's because a vibrant IPO market would spawn more companies able to use their publicly traded stocks as a currency to buy other businesses and attract more talented employees.

A more receptive audience for IPOs emboldens venture capitalists to invest more in startups — a phenomenon that in turn encourages entrepreneurs to put more energy into developing innovative ideas.

But the IPO market has been in a rut since the dot-com bubble burst and a series of influence-peddling scandals led a perception that the system had been rigged to produce big gains for a privileged few, leaving other investors to wallow in the slop left behind.

From January 2001 through Dec. 9 of this year, there were 238 IPOs, according to IPOfinancial.com, which tracks the market. It's a sobering contrast to the froth of the bubble years — from 1999 through 2000 there were a total 1,250 IPOs, according to IPOfinancial.com.

An eye-popping deal like Google's could be enough to help snap the IPO lull, said Michael Moe, chief executive of ThinkEquity, a high-tech investment bank in San Francisco.

"A lot of investors put their hands on a hot oven and got burned so they are being very careful about going close to the oven again," Moe said. "Google's IPO could be the catalyst that helps bring people back."

Other market observers are less sanguine, charging that Google as a rare jewel amid the high-tech rubble.

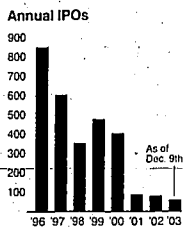
High-tech companies simply



Google founders Sergey Brin, left and Larry Page are shown at the company's headquarters in Mountain View, Calif., March 13. The maker of the popular Internet search engine is widely expected to make its stock market debut during the first half of 2004.

Slow going for IPOs

An unsure economy fraught with corporate scandals has made initial public offerings (IPO) less attractive to both private companies and investors since the '90s tech boom.



SOURCE: IPOfinancial.com AP

don't hold the same allure as they did before the excruciating pain of the dot-com crash caused investors, said David Menlow, IPOfinancial's president. Companies in staid industries such as freighting, steel and finance might even be more appealing to cautious investors than unproven tech companies with greater growth potential.

"Investors are still twitchy," Menlow said. "They want to see a certain crispness from companies selling IPOs. They are no longer interested in companies with

some esoteric business model."

For its part, Mountain View-based Google isn't discussing its IPO plans, citing federal securities laws. Google's silence hasn't stopped other tongues from wagging, however, about an IPO likely to value the 5-year-old company in the \$20 billion range and transform many of its 1,300 employees into millionaires. Google's co-founders, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, probably will be minted as billionaires before they turn 31 next year.

"There is a lot of wishful thinking going on about Google's IPO, but I don't understand why," said Jonathan Silver, managing director of Core Capital Partners, a Washington D.C. venture capital firm.

"Even if Google's IPO really pops and the company winds up being worth \$100 billion, so what? It's not like there are a lot of other promising companies ready to go (IPO) after that train has left the station."

In fact, hundreds of other once-promising startups have disintegrated while Google has thrived. Although the company hasn't yet disclosed its financial statements, Google already is profitable, with revenue this year believed to range between \$700 million and \$1 billion.

Finances aren't the only factors working in Google's favor — millions of loyal users, the search engine already has built a brand that's the envy of long-established businesses.

It's a pedigree few, if any other startups can bring to an IPO.

Among the other Silicon Valley companies likely to pursue IPOs in 2004, online software distributor Salesforce.com is the only one getting much buzz.

Other intriguing IPO prospects include Shopping.com, a Brisbane online service that has become a popular destination among bargain-savvy consumers.

Other candidates, though, are small fry compared to Google. Among the other up-and-comers, Salesforce.com appears to have achieved the greatest financial success. The San Francisco-based company earned \$4.7 million on revenue of \$66 million through three quarters of its current fiscal year, according to documents it filed Dec. 18 in preparation for next year's IPO.

Another San Francisco company with a well-known brand — audio recording pioneer maker Dolby Laboratories Inc. — also is exploring the possibility of a 2004 IPO, ending decades of private ownership.

There isn't much anticipation building for IPOs outside Silicon Valley, Menlow said.

Just about any company hoping to go public in 2004 needs to have a profitable track record, said Reed Tausig, CEO of Callidus Software, which raised \$70 million in an IPO completed in late November.

"Investors aren't interested in unproven business models," said Tausig, who attended 70 different meetings with investors to help sell the merits of Callidus' IPO. "I just don't think there is a huge supply of tech IPOs waiting to happen out there because very few profitable, meat-and-potatoes companies have been built in the last few years."

Callidus, a San Jose maker of employee composition software, became profitable shortly before its IPO, earning \$540,000 during the six months ended in September. The 7-year-old company's IPO price was set at \$14 per share and then the stock rose 24 percent, to \$37, on its first day of trading on the Nasdaq Stock Market. It was down to \$15 on Dec. 11.

Google's IPO seems likely to produce a far bigger bang, although even it faces several formidable threats that could spook investors. The company's success has thrust it into cross-hairs of Microsoft Corp. and Yahoo! Inc., a pair of heavyweights determined to supplant Google as king of online search.

If Microsoft and Yahoo make inroads at Google's expense, all that pent-up investor enthusiasm for the hottest IPO in years could abruptly turn into another cold shower.



Kathy Posner, now retired, sits by the window as she smokes a cigarette in her condo Chicago Dec. 8. Posner bought a long-term care policy from her insurance agent when she was healthy. Just three months after buying the insurance she was diagnosed with heart problems.

Experts disagree on long-term care insurance

NEW YORK (AP) — Aside from being a smoker, Kathy Posner had no known health concerns when an insurance agent persuaded her to buy a long-term care policy at age 49 as a hedge against unexpected disabilities that might land her in a nursing home prematurely.

Just three months after buying the policy, a form of insurance usually seen as more crucial for people over 60, Posner was diagnosed with heart problems and underwent angioplasty. Less than a year later, she needed angioplasty again and then underwent coronary bypass surgery a month after that.

"My first thought was that I didn't need it. I was in perfect health — or I thought I was in perfect health," said Posner, who has sold her consulting firm and retired due to her heart problems.

Now 51, she considers herself lucky to have purchased long-term care insurance when she did because it would have been harder and more expensive to get coverage with her current medical history. But with a premium of \$1,840 a year, Posner's policy is hardly cheap. And while her insurer cannot legally terminate her coverage due to increased medical risk, there's no guarantee that she — or anyone with typical long-term coverage — won't see one or more rate increases of unknown magnitude as the years pass.

Financial planners who see the insurance as a must for young adults argue that increases have been rare in the relatively short history of long-term care policies, and that state regulators who need to approve any rate changes offer a measure of protection.

Critics, however, contend that profit-minded insurers will have no choice but to raise premiums as health care costs soar and their customers grow frail with age. And since most people will see their income decline sharply in retirement, many of those customers may no longer be able to afford the coverage when they're most likely to need it.

No doubt, the risk of serious disability before retirement is real. And at nearly \$150 a year, or \$50,000 per year, the cost of such care can easily wipe out a person's savings in a matter of years.

According to government figures from the mid-1990s, about 3.5 million people between ages 18 and 64 were receiving long-term care in a nursing home, in an assisted-living facility or at home. Surprisingly, that was 40 percent of all the people in this country receiving such care. At the same time, however, those 3.5 million made up a tiny percentage of the more than 150 million people in this country between 18 and 64 in the mid-1990s, meaning that there was just a 1 in 50 chance that a young adult would need long-term care.

In addition, while many older

patients may need to live out their lives under long-term care, the average stay in a nursing home for people under 65 is only about 6.5 months, according to a 1999 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Ultimately, the question may hinge on whether a person views the decision as a purely financial matter or places a higher value on peace of mind.

"I'm a real healthy 48 years old. I hike 40 miles at a clip on the weekend," said Andy Lax, who bought a policy with his wife 38 months ago, when he was 46 and she was 42. Combined, they pay about \$3,000 per year in premiums.

"The working assumption is that I'm not going to be using (the insurance) for 30 years. But I may need it tomorrow, and if so, the expenses could run you into the ground," said Lax, who lives in San Francisco. "I have two kids to support. I was a no-brainer for us."

While both Lax and Posner purchased long-term care insurance through financial planners, most young adults buy it through their employers, said Susan Coronel, long-term care director for AARP-HIA, a Washington-based industry association. Nationally, people under age 50 account for about 2 million of the 9 million long-term care policies sold through employer-sponsored plans.

An informal survey in 2001 found that between 15 percent and 20 percent of existing group policies have seen a rate increase, with the increase ranging from 5 percent to 40 percent, said Coronel.

Since long-term care policies have only come into vogue over the past decade, the market is relatively untapped, and some experts worry that insurance companies are overly anxious to sell policies to low-risk adults.

Benjamin Lipsman, author of "Choosing The Right Long-Term Care Insurance," is very dubious that insurers can meet the eventual claims on those policies without hiking premiums sharply. "It reminds me of a Ponzi scheme where you take new money for old claims until they run out," said Lipsman, who "categorically" recommends that young adults ignore the "emotional blackmail" of the industry and save their money.

But for Burton Beam, co-author of "Meeting The Financial Need of Long-Term Care," the decision ultimately depends on individual circumstances.

"At 50, I'd say it wouldn't be bad to have long-term care insurance — if you can afford it," said Beam, a professor of insurance at The American College in Bryn Mawr, Pa. "Do I look at it as the most vital insurance you should run out and get? I wouldn't say that. Does it mean you have to send your kids to a lesser college? Then I'd say you should go for the better college."

Firm gears up for do-it-yourself rental

The Baltimore Sun

BALTIMORE — In George Jason's world — where technology showers, clothes and feeds its owner in a matter of seconds — a computerized car that can turn itself on and off and rent itself out to consumers might not seem that farfetched.

In 21st-century Baltimore, though, it's a different story. Rick Whipp is trying to marry those two worlds with a technology that allows a car to turn into a touch-pad screen used to rent the vehicle and enable its ignition.

His company, Automated Car Rental LLC of Indiana, is aiming at a niche market of drivers who will opt to pick up their rental cars the high-tech way, just as George Jason might have imagined. "They can be rented unattended," Whipp said.

The idea is to park the cars in places where mainstream rental agencies are tougher to come by. Places such as auto body and repair shops, time shares, businesses that have corporate accounts for rental cars, marinas or retirement communities.

Whipp is testing two of the rental cars, dubbed Touch'n Go cars, in Baltimore, where they rent for \$25 an hour, or no more than \$55 a day and \$275 a week.

Here's how the cars work: The rear driver-side window serves as a touch-screen, which users tap to start the system. The screen shows the user how much fuel is in the car and the cost of a rental, and the user plugs in a name, address, date of birth and credit card and driver's license numbers. The system then provides a loss of damage waiver and collects information about any damage to the car, checks the credit card and license information, and unlocks the car and enables the ignition.

"The ignition is enabled only when the car is unlocked by the authorized user," Whipp said.

To turn the car off, the user gets out and punches a personal passcode into the window screen. The password can be used to enable and deactivate the engine and lock and unlock the car until it is returned. When the car is returned, it calls someone to clean and refuel it, and sends a receipt via fax or e-mail to the user.

Jack Brenn and his wife, Irene, of Florida used a Touch'n Go car while visiting friends on a boat docked at the Lighthouse Point marina in Canton, where the two rental cars in Baltimore are being parked.

"We needed a car simply to drive around," Brenn said. "It was our first time in Baltimore, and we just wanted to see the area."

The Brenns rented the car for three days, using it to go to dinner in Little Italy, shop at the Inner Harbor and tour Fort McHenry. "I thought it was great," Brenn said. "There was no hassle, a key very convenient and very quick."

That's what Dan Naor likes about it too.

Naor, a partner at Lighthouse Point, said visitors who are docked at the marina or staying there temporarily in apartments can ask about cars. Before, Naor's employees would call a rental car agency for them.

Now, with Touch'n Go, they send visitors out to the parking lot without having to worry about insurance, liability or extra manpower. Naor said, "What we like about it is, there's really nothing to do," he said.

Automated Car Rental has been developing its system for nearly three years and testing it for about 10 months. An avid boater, Whipp was based in a key city in Baltimore near his boat at the Lighthouse Point mari-

na while the other eight are being tested in Indiana.

The system is not without problems. Service is spotty in the marina parking lot, so the cars there are being manually rented. But Whipp said his company is switch- ing to a more reliable system in which signal strength won't be a problem.

"Any time you're using wireless technology, you're going to have problems like that," Whipp said. "There are ways to get around them with software, and we are currently enhancing our software to get around some of those issues."

Bill Leslie, who teaches a course in the history of automobiles at Johns Hopkins University, said the idea makes sense for some drivers, but not for everyone.

If people calculated how much their cars cost compared to the

price of renting one only when it's needed, most would opt to rent rather than buy one that would sit in the garage depreciating, Leslie said.

But it would be tough to market Touch'n Go cars as an alternative to owning a vehicle, he said, because a car is "one technology more than any other that we give a personality to. We give it a gender, we talk to it and we curse at it."

Whipp is marketing his cars to the occasional renter. Agencies that close at 6 p.m. or 8 p.m. and are losing overnight rentals might use his technology, he said.

He is also hoping that car rental agencies will become partners with Automated Car Rental, leasing the company's technology, installing it in their cars and leaving the vehicles where they can rent themselves.

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Online sales see healthy rise in '03

Knight Ridder News Service

Online retailers could be in store for a very merry holiday season, as analysts forecast industry sales to increase anywhere between 20 percent and 45 percent over last year, despite rising fears of Internet fraud.

For instance, Forrester Research Inc. in Cambridge, Mass., estimated that online sales will increase 42 percent to \$12.2 billion for the period between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Consumers have been lured by the convenience of online browsing and shopping, free shipping offers, inclement weather and better Web site design, analysts said.

"More and more people are comfortable shopping online," said Abha Bhagat, an analyst at Nielsen/Net Ratings, a market research company.

According to Forrester, about 34 million households have Internet access, and 20 percent of those have high-speed connections that make buying online easier.

More than half of consumers polled by the American Express Retail Index said they planned to go online to compare prices, browse and buy this season. This compares with 46 percent of consumers polled in 2002.

Snowstorms earlier this month across the country forced many consumers to stay at home, helping to bolster online sales.

Landsend.com, the online division of catalog giant Lands' End Inc., said the Dec. 6 Northeast produced record sales for the site, making up 40 percent of the company's total business that weekend. This year, about a third of the company's sales have come from its online unit.

"Even in good weather, our customers don't want to have to battle traffic and the malls," said Sam Taylor, vice president of e-commerce for Lands' End.

He expects Landsend.com to record double-digit percentage sales growth this holiday season compared with last year. For all of 2002, Landsend.com generates sales of \$435 million.

For the second year, some online retailers have offered free shipping to entice customers, said Gene Alvarez, a vice president at Meta Group Inc., a Stamford, Conn., technology research firm in Stamford, Conn.

"Typically, it takes three to five days for a free shipment to arrive, Alvarez said. After this weekend, however, consumers likely will have to pay shipping charges if they want their gifts to arrive by Christmas.

This could be good news for traditional retailers. "The 20th and 21st, I call the 'brick-and-mortar weekend,'" Alvarez said. "Online buying should slow down this weekend."

Still, if customers had a good experience with an online retailer, they are likely to buy again later.

"It's the fulfillment, execution piece that brings consumers back after the holiday season," Alvarez said.

He also said many Internet retailers have revamped their Web pages, making them easier to search. For instance, Wine.com no longer requires customers to know the names of grapes and vineyards.

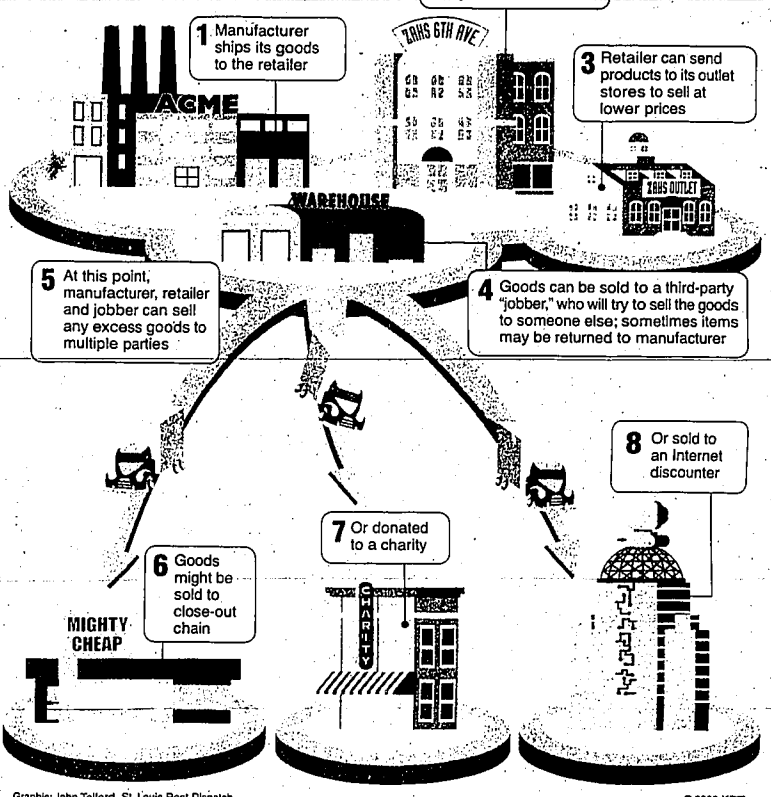
"Before, you would have to know to put in Gallo, Chardonnay, 1993 to get a short return list," Alvarez said. "The assumption was that everybody would know how to spell correctly and would know how to do a computer search."

Despite the growing popularity of online shopping, Web sales will account for only a fraction of all holiday purchases this year. Total holiday sales are expected to top \$217 billion, the National Retail Federation said.

Some industry groups also said fears of online fraud have risen in tandem with Internet sales. This year, spam e-mails that hijacked the identities of legitimate businesses, such as eBay and Citibank, have overwhelmed the nation's inboxes.

Moving the merchandise fast

Retailers today must get rid of excess inventory faster than in the past to make room for the fresh merchandise that keeps up with consumer trends. Here's how they do it:



Graphic: John Telford, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

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Experts predict many holiday shoppers will wait until last minute

Knight Ridder News Service

HACKENSACK, N.J. — Heading into the crucial final shopping weekend of the holiday season, retailers are hoping there are a lot of shoppers out there like Terry Russinko.

Russinko, of East Rutherford, was pushing a cart loaded with toys and comforters, and other gifts through the Wal-Mart in Saddle Brook last week and said her holiday shopping was far from done.

"Actually, I just started," she said. She said she still needed to make at least one mall shopping trip, as well as stops at a few other stores, before she could check everyone off her gift lists.

Two weekend snowstorms in the Northeast have been blamed for less-than-stellar retail sales figures, but optimistic retail analysts are counting on the American tradition of a last-minute rush to boost the final figures.

Last year, 41 percent of all holiday sales occurred during the last weekend before Christmas, according to the International Council of Shopping Centers. This year, because of the snowstorms and the growing tendency of time-crunched Americans to procrastinate, the council is expecting 50 percent of all sales to be rung up this coming weekend.

Several retail watchers have scaled back their predictions for this year's holiday in light of the early December figures. Expectations for the holiday season range from a 3 percent increase over last year to the 5.7 percent hike predicted by the National Retail Federation last week.

"The NRF is sticking with that figure, and pointing to a survey of shoppers that showed only 10 percent of Americans had finished their shopping by mid-December, and that the average consumer still has a buy gifts for at least half the people on her shopping list. "We are a nation of procrastinators," said NRF President Tracy Mullin, forecasting packed parking lots and long cash register lines this weekend.

The International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) also is predicting an eleven-hour surge of shoppers. Its survey of shoppers found that as of Dec. 14, nearly

"Don't let it snow, don't let it snow" was the wish of store owners, mall managers, and retail executives as they prepared for Saturday.

one-quarter hadn't even begun to shop for Christmas.

"I think some people also believe that if they wait it out, they'll see better deals closer to Christmas," said Patricia Duker, a spokeswoman for the ICSC. "I'm not sure that's going to be true this year."

In the past, stores have encouraged the last-minute habit, offering deeper discounts as the calendar neared December 25. In 2001 and 2002, the economic outlook was so bleak that some retailers began marking down holiday merchandise before Thanksgiving. This year, aside from price wars in toys and electronics, more merchandise is selling at full price, a fact that will help profit margins.

"Compared to last year, when retailers were hiring their malls because of low traffic and bloated inventory levels, this year, retailers feel comfortable that inventories are clean and will likely be cleaned out in January in time for shipments of Spring merchandise," according to a report by Jeffrey Edelman, apparel analyst for UBS Investment Research. As a result, he wrote, "we should see a boost to profitability."

Britt Beemer, chairman of America's Research Group in Charleston, S.C., said stores, however, may pay a price in the long run for not offering markdowns.

"Retailers have been trying to hold down sale advertising this year, but what worries me is that in doing so they've reduced some of the enthusiasm of consumers to shop and buy more, more, more," Beemer said.

Before the holiday shopping season, some were hopeful this would be the year in which consumers again shop with abandon.

The jury is still out on whether or not that will happen.

Still, most analysts expect it to be the best retail season since 1999.

Upscale retailers have been pleasantly surprised with their results since the Thanksgiving weekend. Target and Gap also reported strong increases.

Wal-Mart, the country's largest retailer, dampened Wall Street's enthusiasm saying its holiday results will hit the low end of its predicted increase in same store sales. However, that would still mean sales are up three percent over the last holiday season.

The Grinch that could steal sales on the last weekend before Christmas would be another snowstorm.

North Jersey retailers are watching the skies as closely as they're watching their cash registers.

"Don't let it snow, don't let it snow" was the wish of store owners, mall managers, and retail executives as they prepared for Saturday.

"The first two Saturdays in December usually would be big days. This year, due to the adverse weather, they weren't," said Victor Olivetti, owner of Gift Gallery collectibles stores at Bergen Mall and Menlo Park Mall. "I'm just glad this weekend looks good," he said, only to hear that some weather forecasters are predicting flurries or worse for Saturday. "For this Saturday," he said. "Oh, no!"

Olivetti said "destination shoppers" who have a particular gift in mind will not be discouraged by bad weekend weather; they might simply delay a purchase until Monday or Tuesday. However, with a wet weekend, "what you don't get is the impulse shopper, the person who is looking around for ideas."

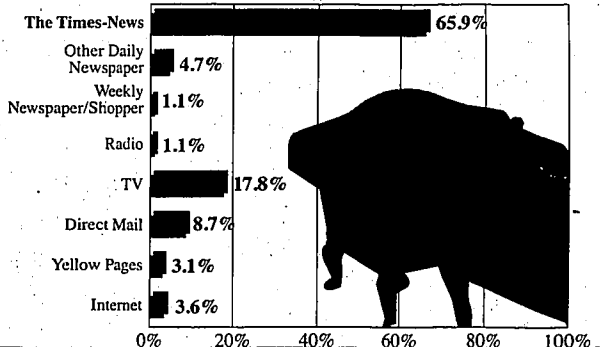
Carol Cogger, an owner of the Cogger's Thyme at Home gift shop in Wood-Ridge, N.J., said the week before Christmas is her busiest — and most profitable — week of the year and she expects this year to be no different.

Her sales are up significantly — more than 20 percent — over last year, and her customers are spending more, she said. "People are happy about Christmas this year," she said. "That's what we're sensing. People I think are back to their old buying habits."

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ISU researchers make discovery

POCATELLO (AP) — Idaho State University computer science researchers recently discovered a new algorithm to help train artificial neural networks used by industries.

What's that mean? Artificial neural networks essentially operate like the nervous systems of a human or animal and have artificial neurons inside. The networks are designed much like computers, but whereas a person must tell a computer how to solve a problem, an artificial neural network can solve the problem on its own.

"(The neural network) learns based on what's shown to do and can approximate any function," said Viti Kantabutra, ISU associate professor of computer science.

Kantabutra said the artificial neural networks are used to recognize images, handwriting, and voice.

The networks are used in industry especially when dealing with character recognition.

Kantabutra said some scanners in today's market have artificial neural networks and when a program is activated it can read the document and recognize it.

Another application for the networks is weather forecasting and predictions.

For the artificial networks to function, they have to go through a series of training exercises where they might repeatedly see various concepts until they can recognize the real answer.

For example, a network might be shown 2,000 variations of the letter A and after its training will be able to determine if a letter is or is not A.

One of the problems with training the neural networks is that in different situations a network

might not stop training, but continue the cycle, Kantabutra said.

This is one of the reasons why neural networks aren't widely used. "The most important of these problems is that these networks have to be trained to learn to solve the problems they are meant to solve, much like humans and animals have to be trained to solve problems," Kantabutra said.

He said training algorithms are often slow and can get stuck indefinitely, including fast-training algorithms.

Over the past year Kantabutra and ISU computer science students Elena Zhelava, Batsukh Tsendajav, Angela Hillier and Steven Miller tried to develop an algorithm that wouldn't get stuck during the training process.

Kantabutra said the researchers focused on three different problems. The first two were highly technical and benchmark problems or popular-problems-used-to-measure the training of an algorithm.

The third problem revolved around character recognition with the numbers zero through nine.

The new algorithm researchers discovered, when tested on some well-known difficult problems, trains neural networks quickly and reliably without getting stuck.

Kantabutra said he hopes the new discovery extends to another class of procedures for other neural networks.

There are a lot of exciting things going on with the world of computers today including the Internet and programming, he said.

The research project is funded by a grant from the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research in Idaho and the National Science Foundation.



Idaho State University Associate Professor of Computer Science Viti Kantabutra discusses recent research work in his office on campus Nov. 21, in Pocatello.

EBay advertises land plot in Arizona for \$5.5 million

MESA, Ariz. (AP) — Tortilla Flat, a little spot of land in Arizona home to a few wood buildings near the Salt River Lakes, is for sale on the Internet for \$5.5 million.

Advertised as one of the "last remnants of the Old West," the town's listing on eBay has received more than 6,500 hits.

Dave Levi has shared ownership of the town and its well-known restaurant for five years with his sister and brother-in-law, Pam and Alvin Ross. But Levi said he and his partners are testing the waters by putting it up for sale.

"I'm getting too old for this stuff, plus (the Ross's) have their kids and grandkids back home," said Levi, 54.

Nestled in the Superstition Mountains about 18 miles northeast of Apache Junction on winding state Route 88, the restaurant offers prickly pear cactus ice cream, half-pound cowboy burgers and saddle seating at the bar.

"That little place is just like running a city. It's a young man or young couple's business. That's a lot of hours," Levi said.

With the purchase of one's very own historic Arizona town, which was settled as crews constructed the road to the Roosevelt Dam, comes old traditions that just won't die.

When the Roosevelt Dam was still under construction in the early 1900s, the road between Tortilla Flat and the dam often flooded,

stranding construction workers or family members in town.

To ensure they had funds to eat and buy supplies, they would leave cash with their names signed on it behind the restaurant bar.

Today, instead of leaving the money behind the bar, thousands of signed \$1 bills and currency from around the world are calling cards of visitors, decorating the restaurant and gift shop.

The town has also proven its mettle, surviving floods and fires over the years. In August 1942, a flood wiped out the town at its peak of 125 residents. While no one was killed, most of the buildings were destroyed.

A 1987 fire destroyed the motel and the restaurant. The restaurant was rebuilt in 1988 with wood from old barns and other structures in Apache Junction to keep the Old West feel.

Tortilla Flat is popular among motorcycle riders, Phoenix residents seeking a day-trip getaway and also attracts thousands of visitors from around the world.

"It's enjoyable," Levi said. "Sometimes it's hectic, but all in all it's pretty fun."

The land on which the town sits is leased from the U.S. Forest Service.

The 20-year transferable lease, now in its third year, is included in the sale.

Biologists move, mark swans

BOISE (AP) — Wildlife biologists have marked and moved more than 60 trumpeter swans in eastern Idaho to help avert a winter die-off of the birds.

For the third year in a row, state, federal and tribal agencies are working on trumpeter recovery efforts. Residents are being asked to help out by reporting whenever they see swans that have been marked with a dyed-pink wing and a radio collar.

"While temporary wildlife technicians have been trained to help with the birds, assistance from the public in reporting swan sightings is very important," said biologist Lauri Hanauka-Brown of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

The trumpeter swan populations nationwide have made a comeback, but the intermountain population, which includes birds on the Henry's Fork River and at Harriman State Park, is tenuous.

Depending on conditions and the number of birds, a harsh winter could ice up the aquatic plants the swans eat and kill

many of the birds.

Biologists have been using an aircraft to approach the swans at night and sweep them aboard with nets. They are marked and fitted with colored neck collars.

The biologists plan to trap a total of 100 young cygnets and relocate the birds farther south to the Bear River. They had rounded up 62 by midweek. It is hoped the young birds will disperse to new wintering areas.

Last year, 78 birds were trapped. Trapping is only the first phase.

Residents are being asked to immediately call the Idaho Department of Fish and Game at 1-208-525-7250 if they see a swan with a green or yellow collar or a pink wing.

The project has lost two people this year. Two Preston-area people have been cited for illegally shooting one trumpeter, and using lead shot, which has been banned from waterfowl hunting. The other swan had flown to Utah, where hunting of smaller trumpeter swans is allowed. The trumpeter was shot by mistake.

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Idaho Falls A&I Cellular, 1775 E. 17th St., 542-2501

Idaho Falls** 1181 E. 17th St., 522-1000
Idaho Falls** Wal-Mart, 1201 E. 23rd St., 524-9080
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Sunday, Dec. 21, 2003

THE ACES ON BRIDGE

Bobby Wolff

Dear Mr. Wolff:
Do you like to play jump bids by a passed hand as weak, fit-showing or something else? Does it matter whether you are looking at a competitive auction or not?

Picture This, Grenada, Miss.

ANSWER: If you play, as I do, that weak two does not guarantee rock-solid suits, then as a passed hand you can afford to use almost all jumps in new suits as promising a fit for partner. You can't have a single-suit in the suit you've just bid, or you would have opened a pre-empt. Fit bids are one of the more useful "expert" inventions. I'll come back to the subject again soon, I promise.

Dear Mr. Wolff:
How far should I have competed here? I was dealt ♠A-Q-10-7, ♥8-5-3, ♦A-Q-9-5, ♣A-J-3. I opened one diamond and heard my LHO bid one heart. My partner raised to two diamonds, and my RHO bid two hearts. Should I have joined in with three diamonds? I passed and we sold out to two hearts, but we could have made three diamonds.

Weak Ending, Dayton, Ohio

ANSWER: Since a one-diamond opening almost always delivers a four-card suit, you had no extra shape, or values, over what you promised. Your one plus is that you had no wasted values in hearts, but would need more to bid on here. Give yourself a fifth diamond or a 4-4 shape, and you might bid on in pairs if nonvulnerable, but not otherwise.

Dear Mr. Wolff:
What is the right way to play a jump cue-bid if the opponents open a major for a minor, for that matter?

Leaping Leopard, Hobbs, N.M.

ANSWER: There is a lot to recommend a simple style here. A jump in a minor opened by your partner should be natural and preemptive, but a jump in a major

suit opened by your RHO might sensibly be played as promising a solid minor suit, asking your partner to bid no-trump with a guard in RHO's suit.

Dear Mr. Wolff:
My partner sprang a sequence on me that I did not understand at the time. I held ♠K-4, ♥Q-10-8-5-3, ♦A-K-9-5, ♣J-4, and when my partner opened one club, I responded one heart. My partner jumped to three hearts, I tried four diamonds as a cuebid, and my partner jumped to five hearts, which I took to focus on trumps. So I passed, missing a good slam. Was I wrong?

Five Alive, Oak Ridge, Tenn.

ANSWER: My belief (not everyone agrees) is that a jump to five of the trump suit normally asks for good trumps. But when, as here, one suit has not been cuebid, the jump asks for control in that suit. Similarly, if the opponents have bid a suit, the five-level jump asks for control in that suit.

Dear Mr. Wolff:
Should you play your normal system over partner's one no-trump if your RHO doubles that call? Does it matter if the double is for penalties as opposed to showing some sort of two-suit?

Making Change, Bellingham, Wash.

ANSWER: I'd advocate leaving your system in place over any sort of artificial double, with redouble showing a good hand—and creating forcing passes through two no-trump. However, if the opponents double one no-trump for penalties, you might consider using the redouble as an escape to two clubs, with the rest of your system remaining unchanged.

ANSWER: There is a lot to recommend a simple style here. A jump in a minor opened by your partner should be natural and preemptive, but a jump in a major

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WATCH YOUR INCOME RISE EVERY MORNING!
Business Opportunities
The Times-News has always dedicated itself to enhancing our delivery service for our customers. If you are very organized, self-motivated, and enjoy working unsupervised, then we have the perfect business opportunity for you. We invite individuals who reflect our commitment to customer service and circulation growth to apply. Papers are early morning delivery.
The Times-News has independent contractor opportunities in many areas throughout the Magic Valley.
Call Jeni at 208-733-0931 ext. 302.

OPERATOR
The City of Twin Falls is accepting applications for PART-TIME DAY OPERATOR. Beginning monthly salary is \$2139. Under general direction of the Park Supervisor, performs a variety of general maintenance and mechanical tasks in the City Parks and recreation facilities. High school diploma or GED, equivalent required as well as a combination of education and experience that demonstrates a general knowledge of the operations and repair of mechanical equipment and various hand tools. Class "B" C.D.L. and State of Idaho's Professional Operator License is required within one year of hiring. For a complete application packet contact the Personnel Office located in City Hall, 321 2nd Avenue East, Twin Falls, phone (208)733-2551 or email personnel@td.id.gov. Closing date is 12-31-2003. The City of Twin Falls is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Merry Christmas from the Employees of Teleperformance U.S.A!
After the gifts are unwrapped, the family get-togethers are over, and everyday life is back to normal, come see us at...
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Call or Stop In to Schedule an Interview - 1399 FILLMORE SUITE 502
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PROFESSIONAL
Idaho Youth Ranch is seeking a professional, caring individual to work with at-risk youth in a beautiful Ranch setting near Rupert as a Group Leader. Excellent environment and benefits. Bachelor's degree with experience in group sessions required. Contact Cameron: 208-532-4117 cmc@idoyouthranch.org EOE

SALES
District Sales Manager
Idaho Utah
Increase opportunity is currently available for a dynamic energetic, and sales oriented individual. ABS Global, worldwide producer and marketer of bovine related products, is currently seeking a District Sales Manager (DSM) to manage business growth and development in Idaho & Utah. This district is predominantly dairy influenced and is considered a solid high volume/high growth territory. An effective DSM will maintain existing sales business while facilitating increases in ABS market share; recruit and provide leadership to independent Representatives throughout assigned region and manage the district by getting the process and expenses. We seek a highly motivated sales manager with the potential to drive ABS business in Idaho & Utah into the district's growth opportunities. Ideal candidates should be familiar with the dairy industry as it relates to artificial insemination and animal care products. Candidates should possess a Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture or related field and 2+ year of demonstrated sales and business requirement. The ability to manage and geographically dispersed sales force and knowledge of sales revenue and expense budgeting are critical. To be a good match you must be intelligent, have common sense, high integrity, be customer service oriented, and have the drive to move forward at a fast pace. ABS Global is well leader in the production and related animal care products. We have the largest independent representative workforce managed by some of the most knowledgeable District Sales Managers in the industry. We offer competitive salaries and comprehensive benefits package. If you are interested in becoming a part of our world-class sales force, please submit your resume with salary requirements to ABS GLOBAL, Attn: Agnes Wooters 2340 W. Whiteland Ave., Suite A, Visalia, CA 93277 Fax 559-713-0580 awooters@absglobal.com

RECEPTIONIST
Work for a great company! Idaho Housing and Finance Association has an immediate opening for a full-time Receptionist in our Twin Falls office. This position is responsible for clerical duties including: typing, correspondence office supply ordering, appointment scheduling, providing explanations of HUD's Section 8 rental assistance program, answering and routing all incoming telephone calls, handling landlord/tenant questions, processing pre-applications for assistance and greeting and assisting walk-in traffic.
Prefer two years clerical or secretarial experience including the ability to type 65 wpm. Requires excellent customer service skills. Must be able to maintain effective working relationships with other employees, tenants, landlords and the general public.
Compensation based upon experience and includes a great benefits package. Interested applicants apply at: 844 North Washington, Ste. 300 Twin Falls from 9:00-5:00, Monday - Friday or at your local job service office. You may also download an application from the internet at: www.ihfa.org.
Please send completed application and resume to: Human Resources Department IDAHO HOUSING & FINANCE ASSOCIATION P.O. Box 7899 Boise, Idaho 83702-1899

Above description is not inclusive of all job duties. Qualified candidates must be able to perform essential functions with or without reasonable accommodation. AA/EEOE

RENTAL MANAGER
Idaho Lumber and Rental established growing rental center from additons to backyard, looking for experienced, self-motivated meticulous organized strong leader able to manage personnel. Will be working with nice people in a pleasant atmosphere. Call for interview 788-5333 Matt

200 EMPLOYMENT
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*Retirement/403b and/or *20 Hr. Week Benefits Avail. *Life Ins./AD&D
Hospital Sponsored

WOW LOGISTICS
WOW Logistics, a leader in the warehousing and distribution industry, has a full-time opening at our Idaho facility.
Operations Coordinator
Part-Time 8am-1:30pm
Possibly could turn into full-time
Must possess accurate data entry skills and ability to handle multiple duties at once. Responsibilities include: data entry into Warehouse Management System creating bills of lading and invoices, handling customer situations, answering multi line phone system.
Must have general computer skills and be familiar with office machines, detailed mathematical aptitude, and organizational skills a must.
Must be able to communicate effectively, be able to handle multiple projects at once, work well under pressure, be a self-starter, and be detail oriented.
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● X-RAY TECH - Full Time Nights 7 on/7 off. ARRT registered or eligible. \$5,000 sign on bonus available.
● PHYSICAL THERAPISTS - Full-time and part-time positions. Must current Idaho license.
● POLYSOMNOGRAPHIC TECHNOLOGIST - FT position. Registered in Polysomnography or Respiratory Therapy (RT) preferred.
● OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY - Days, with rotating weekend, 40 hours per week. You must have a current license in the State of Idaho. Previous experience preferred.
● CERTIFIED SURGICAL TECHNICIANS - Full-time and part-time positions, Days and Evenings. You must be a graduate of an accredited surgical technologist program. Certification must follow within 6 months of employment.
● SLEEP LAB TEAM LEADER - Full time, 40 hours a week. Days/Evenings position. You must be a certified polysomnography technician with three years supervisory experience and two years applicable clinical experience. RRT and/or EKG is a plus.
● PHLEBOTOMIST/LAB ASSISTANT - 3 positions - Two on-call and one part-time (20 hours per week). You must have a HS diploma or equivalent. This position also requires excellent customer service and good communication skills. Previous phlebotomy experience preferred.
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WOMEN SEEKING MEN

WOMEN SEEKING MEN
GENDER SEES FREED
SWF 30, 5'5", dark brown hair, petite figure, enjoys traveling, reading, music, entertainment, computers, different cultures. Seeking to meet someone who is fun, intelligent, and has a sense of humor. (Boise) 837235

MEN SEEKING WOMEN

MEN SEEKING WOMEN
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SWM 40, 5'5", 150lbs, light complexion, enjoys fishing, hunting, boating, and golf. Seeking a woman who is fun, intelligent, and has a sense of humor. (Boise) 837235

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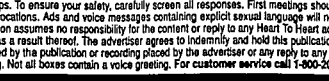
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MISCELLANEOUS

A FRIENDLY REMINDER

It is against Twin Falls City Ordinance to top trees that are in the City's right-of-ways.

For more information call 736-2265.*

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Check Out The Magic Valley Section Of The Times-News for the auction calendar, everyday and starting 2:47 at www.magicvalley.com

Auction Advertising
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GO-CART 2 seater, Yurfdog, 5 h.p., \$600. 5 h.p. Sears boat motor, \$250. Sewing machine, antique Singer, treadle, \$250. Call 208-487-2098 or 208-309-0063.*

LONG COAT Eddie Bauer, like new, retail \$500, \$100. Call 208-734-7568*

MISCELLANEOUS
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MISCELLANEOUS GE 19" TV, Sirkka vacuum - 1 yr stand, 736-1977*

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SCHOOL BUS 1960's painted white, excellent cheap storage, needs engine work. \$500/offer. Call 208-731-2381.*

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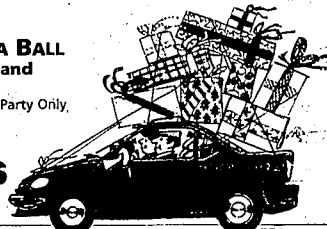
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In excellent condition.
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Retail **\$35,410**
Rebates **\$2,500**
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6 To Choose From

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USED VEHICLES**
THE RIGHT WAY. THE RIGHT CAR.

**Plus, get a GIANT stuffed
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12 at this price
NEW over \$15,000 **\$7,988**

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FAMILY LIFE

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Features Editor: Steve Grump - 733-0931, Ext. 223

The Times-News

Sunday, December 21, 2003

Section E

Giving catches the giver by surprise sometimes

"What three little words best sum up the spirit of Christmas for you?" read one Christmas quiz. "I love you," Dr. Lee returns it.

There have been years when I thought we were going to have to take out a second mortgage on the house to pay for electric trains and doll houses. It's my own fault. But when I let the commercialism of the season take control of me, I somehow fool myself into believing that the more money you spend on Christmas, the better off everyone is going to be.

In a book of kids' letters to Santa, I read one from an 8-year-old: "You don't have to leave me any presents for Christmas," the child wrote. "Just leave the money and I'll go to the discount toy store."

So often, that's the way we live. Even though our very best Christmas memories seldom revolve around the size of the pile of packages under the tree.

According to the current issue of Lifestyle Monitor, 39 percent of Americans plan to spend more on holiday gifts this year, as compared to last year. And if you're anxious to take a peek inside our packages, here's a hint: Apparel gifts will account for 34 percent of what's under the tree this year, and jewelry will account for 9 percent. Plus, 46 percent of consumers say they are willing to sacrifice a little quality to save money this time around.

As far as timing goes, 29 percent of men don't buy any Christmas gifts before the month of December, while only 15 percent of women put it off that late.

I'm never able to guess what my mother is going to send us for Christmas, even though she does her shopping very early. For years, she would mail us presents in November and then find it impossible to keep the gifts a secret. So she would call and tell us what was in every package she had mailed. Then as she got older, she began to forget what she had bought. Now, we get surprise Christmas gifts - and Mom waits to hear what she got us for Christmas.

Even so, my most memorable Christmas gifts are those I gave to people I didn't even know. I remember taking my kids shopping for needy families, and explaining to them why we give money to the Salvation Army bell ringers and helping them bake cookies to take to neighborhood and church shut-ins. I remember that stuff I unwrapped on given Dec. 25.

That's got to be a hint as to where the real meaning of Christmas resides. And all it takes is being open to the needs around me. A minister friend of mine once told me about his most memorable Christmas. He had just finished leading the early Christmas Eve service at his church when a parishioner came up and pressed two \$100 bills into his hand - for someone in need at Christmas.

"We've already delivered all the Christmas baskets," the minister explained. "Save it for next year." But the parishioner was determined. "You'll think of someone," he said.

Suddenly, the name of a family flashed through the minister's mind. The family had been through some hard times that year, but the minister wasn't sure how hard. On a hunch, the minister told his own family he would be a little late for dinner, and he rushed out to buy food, gifts and all the trimmings.

When he knocked on the door that had flashed across his mind, he found the family at home - with no tree, no presents, no turkey. The mother opened the door. "We knew you would come," she said, with tears in her eyes. "I'm not sure who she was expecting," the minister said, "and I certainly didn't know I would come." But maybe that's what real giving is like. Maybe, sometimes, it even catches the giver by surprise. Especially at Christmas time.

Denise Turner is assistant features editor at The Times-News.

Electric Enthusiasm

M.V. folks go big with holiday light displays this year

By Karin Kowalski Times-News writer

TWIN FALLS - It's beginning to look a lot like decorations. Holiday cheer in the form of lights and other outdoor decorations is reasserting itself in the Magic Valley after a couple of years of more subdued celebrations, observers say.

Popular items this year include inflatable snowmen, lighted reindeer and spiral trees which attach lights to a pole, imitating the shape of a tree - as well as traditional decorations.

"The icicles are as popular as ever," said Ben Swensen, manager of Swenmart. He also said white lights are selling more than multicolored ones.

Other trends in lighting are making things easier for the busy holiday decorator. Mesh lights, with bulbs evenly spaced on a grid, make it easier to cover a bush in lights than it would be with traditional strands of lights. "They seem to be an easy fix," said Todd Taylor, the manager of M.H. King's in Twin Falls. "You get a lot for a small amount of effort."

Items like inflatable statues and spiral trees also create big effects with minimal setup.

Chris Jones, owner of Festive Glow Holiday Lighting in Jerome - a lighting setup, take-down and storage service - said more people are decorating their houses than in years past. Jones focuses on offering unique lights such as snowflakes, stockings and candy canes. He doesn't use the inflatable statues because high winds tend to knock them down or tear them.

The holiday lighting business was stagnant after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, said Blaine Pope, owner of Christmas Decor in Twin Falls. But it is picking up this year. Even people who don't use his service are putting up more lights, possibly because of the recent good weather.

Those who go all-out in their Christmas decorating bring great enthusiasm to the task. "My husband and I just both love Christmas lights," said Grace Hill of 3725 Bühler Road in Filer. She remembers looking at lights with her family on Christmas Eve when she was growing up. The decorations continue her family tradition.



Jim and Grace Hill have 37,700 lights on their home near Filer. Grace had a friendly competition with her sister, Dee Humphrey, to see how many lights each could put on their homes.

There are about 40,000 lights on their house. Hill counts them so that she can divide the lights among six circuits and not trip the circuit breakers. The Hills started decorating Nov. 1 and finished the day after Thanksgiving.

The decorations - triple - their electric bill, but Hill doesn't mind.

"It's just for one month," she said.

The Hills have done large-scale decorations for the last five years. They have a "friendly competition" with Hill's sister, Delores Humphrey. There is no prize, other than the right to brag.

Delores and David Humphrey have been decorating their house at 3616 N. 2800 E. in Twin Falls for three years. They have a herd of reindeer including four movable ones. The house, outbuildings and corral are covered in lights. They also have candy canes, popcicles, stars, angels, spiral trees, and a wooden sleigh. The new items this year are trumpet angels. The Humphreys have decorated everywhere they have lived.

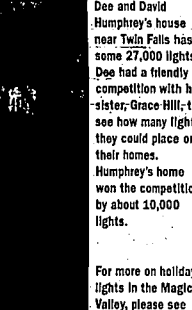
"We always have a ball," Delores Humphrey said. For some in the Magic Valley, holiday decorating means every holiday. Kasey Weight and husband Harley have been lighting up their house at 291 Tyler St. in Twin Falls for 45 years. They add something new almost every year. This year's addition is two lighted drummer boys.



For some in the Magic Valley, holiday decorating means every holiday. Kasey Weight and husband Harley have been lighting up their house at 291 Tyler St. in Twin Falls for 45 years. They add something new almost every year. This year's addition is two lighted drummer boys.



Dee and David Humphrey's house near Twin Falls has some 27,000 lights. Dee had a friendly competition with her sister, Grace Hill, to see how many lights they could place on their homes. Humphrey's home won the competition by about 10,000 lights.



For more on holiday lights in the Magic Valley, please see page E1.

For more on holiday lights in the Magic Valley, please see page E1.

long that their neighbors expect it. "We're just kids at heart," Weight said.

Times-News writer Karin Kowalski can be reached at 735-3231 or write to her at kowalski@magicvalley.com

Shopping-mall St. Nicks deliver the goods

The Washington Post

Shopping mall Santas don't just drive sleighs—they drive sales.

That's why they've become an industry themselves.

The best ones bring customers back year after year and provide retailers with an important competitive edge in the season in which most sales occur.

As a result, almost every enclosed shopping center in America hosts a Santa, with more than 1,200 of them in malls this year, according to the International Council of Shopping Centers. Last year, Wal-Mart Stores Inc. for the first time fielded richly suited Santas for a coordinated one-day event at its 2,966 stores in the United States, with photos provided free. They repeated the event this year.

Shopping malls have enlarged their Santa-related offerings beyond photos to snow globes and refrigerator magnets and expanded Santa's clientele beyond toddlers to include pets and adults.

"There are a lot more Santas out there this season than there have been in the past," said Ruth Rosenquist, a spokeswoman for Noerr Programs, a 16-year-old company that is deploying 200 Santas to malls this year.

The best Santas turn the mall into "a destination," she said. "They become a huge magnet."

Some of the most sought-after Santas, the ones who draw the biggest



Mike Graham, the Santa Claus at Tysons Corner Center in northern Virginia, has become a seasonal attraction for visitors like Madeline McGeohan, 4 and a half.

crowds and customer dollars to particular malls, have become virtual free agents, sometimes earning as much as \$30,000 for the seven-day-a-week, 10-hour-day holiday season, stretching from mid-November to Dec. 25, according to shopping-mall managers. Mid-range Santas can earn about \$10,000 for working a full season, full time, and part-time Santas earn about \$7 or \$8 an hour.

The Santa stars earn top dollar because they bring a lot of money to malls, which are offering an array of photo-related products to parents and their offspring. At Tysons Corner Center in northern Virginia, for example, the Santa package, which includes seven pictures and a gift, runs \$24.99. Blitzen's Package is \$13.99 and Vixen's

Package is \$8.99.

Although parents typically aren't required to buy pictures of their children posing with Santa, many do. And when parents take their children to the mall, they are also likely to stop to make some purchases along the way.

"We view (Santa) as a traffic driver," said Patricia Duker, a spokeswoman for the International Council of Shopping Centers. "They increase the opportunity for sales, definitely."

More adults are going to Santa now, too, which means Santa no longer sits on a throne, but more likely on a bench, to accommodate the wider girth of his visitors.

People are even taking their pets to have their pictures taken with Santa. Last week, Potomac Mills in Prince William County, Va., hosted an event called "Santa Paws," for people and their pets. About 35 people showed up with their dogs and cats.

Santas have been spruced up-provided with better costumes, trained in child-handling techniques and screened to ensure they are vice-free. They are a lot more likely to look the part than the Santas of yesteryear. Many sport real beards, either naturally white or turned snowy by a multi-month bleaching process that produces just the right shade. In the Santa profession, Santas who don't have beards are dismissively labeled "synthetics," and are viewed as pale imitations of the real thing.

Handle holiday stress effectively

Suggestions to help you sail through the season:

- Remember four habits that help you beat stress year round: Get daily exercise, eat a balanced diet, sleep seven to eight hours a night and limit caffeine.
 - Don't let anyone else decide the "right" way for you to mark the holidays. Make your own decisions and don't feel guilty.
 - If money is short, be up front about it. Let people - including kids - know you'll be spending less.
 - Use a large calendar to keep track of planned holiday events, and set priorities. Join down events you spot in the paper that are inexpensive or free.
 - Don't feel you have to make every holiday treat your family has enjoyed through the years. They might miss a certain cookie, but they'll get over it.
 - If possible, calculate what you will need - total amounts of such things as butter, nuts and flour - and buy in bulk.
 - Make some holiday tasks into social occasions so everyone can help. Examples: a tree-trimming party or group candy-making session.
 - Lonely? Find ways to help others: Volunteer at a hospital, make deliveries to shut-ins; serve in a soup kitchen.
 - Do something every day that enriches you, even a pleasure as small as a whiff of potpourri.
- Sources: Mary Beth Brock, occupational therapist at the Medical University of South Carolina's Institute of Psychiatry; JoAnne Herman, certified stress-management educator at USC's College of Nursing, and the State of Columbia, S.C.

FAMILY LIFE

ENGAGEMENTS

METCALF-MORGAN

GOODING - Julie Metcalf of Gooding announces the engagement of her daughter, Hillary Ann Metcalf, to Douglas Gale Morgan, son of DeAnn Morgan of Gooding.

Metcalf is a graduate of Gooding High School and the College of Southern Idaho. She will be attending Boise State University.

Morgan is a graduate of Gooding High School and CSI. He also will be attending BSU.

The wedding is planned for Saturday, Jan. 3, 2004, at the First



Douglas Morgan and Hillary Metcalf Christian Church in Twin Falls. A reception will be held following the ceremony at the Turf Club in Twin Falls.

BARROTT-STRINGHAM

KIMBERLY - John and Chris Barrott of Kimberly announce the engagement of their daughter, Tiffany Alice Barrott, to Jesse Allen Stringham, son of Phillip and Cindy Stringham of Payette.

Barrott is a graduate of Kimberly High School and is attending Idaho State University, majoring in early childhood development.

Stringham is a graduate of Payette High School and is attending ISU, majoring in sports medicine. He served a mission for the LDS Church in the Dominican Republic.

The wedding is planned for Friday, Jan. 2, 2004, in the Idaho Falls Temple. A reception will be



Jesse Stringham and Tiffany Barrott held from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 2, at the LDS Church in Kimberly.

HAYNES-BECK

RUPERT - Thomas R. and Susan Haynes of Rupert announce the engagement of their daughter, Lindsey Rae Haynes, to Ryn Harris Beck, son of Robert M. and Gayle Beck of Burley.

Haynes is a 2002 graduate of Minico High School and is currently attending Brigham Young University-Idaho, majoring in nursing.

Beck is a 1999 graduate of Burley High School. He served an LDS mission in Baton Rouge, La. He is also attending BYU-Idaho and is majoring in ag business.

The wedding is planned for



Ryn Beck and Lindsey Haynes Saturday, Dec. 27, in the Logan LDS Temple. A reception to honor the couple will be from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 3, at the Rupert 1st and 7th Ward building, 806 G St.

SCHNACKENBERG-SOLOMON

WENDELL - John and Sharon Schnackenberg of Libby, Mont., announce the engagement of their daughter, Rebekah Schnackenberg, to Marty Solomon, son of Gray and Raylene Solomon of Wendell.

Schnackenberg is a graduate of Libby High School in Libby, Mont. She is employed at Hilton Garden Inns in Boise.

Solomon is a graduate of Wendell High School and currently is attending Boise Bible College. He is employed at Southwest Christian Church in Boise.

The wedding is planned for Saturday, Jan. 3, 2004, in Libby, Mont. A reception will be held



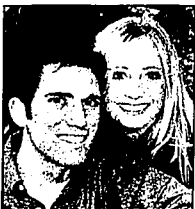
Rebekah Schnackenberg and Marty Solomon from 3 to 6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 10, at the Twin Falls Reformed Church.

HARDING-FOWLER

TWIN FALLS - Bruce L. and Cynthia D. Harding of Twin Falls announce the engagement of their daughter, Desarae Harding, to Nathan Fowler, son of Donald Fowler and Dale Fowler, both of Virginia Beach, Va.

Harding is a graduate of Twin Falls High School and currently is attending Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. She is teaching piano students in Provo.

Fowler is a graduate of Florida's West Orange High School. He served an LDS Spanish-speaking mission in Ventura, Calif. He is attending BYU in the pre-dental program and is employed at West Valley Regional Medical Center in Provo.



Nathan Fowler and Desarae Harding. The wedding is planned for Friday, Dec. 26, in the Salt Lake City Temple. A reception will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 27, at the Harding residence.

RICHARDSON-WILLIAMS

JEROME - Brent and Diane Richardson of Ogden, Utah, announce the engagement of their daughter, Megan Richardson, to Brian Williams, son of Rob and Susan Williams of Jerome.

Richardson is a 2001 graduate of Bonneville High School in Ogden. She is attending Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah.

Williams is a 1997 graduate of Jerome High School. He is attending BYU in Provo and is employed at the university.

The wedding is planned for Friday, Dec. 26, in the Ogden LDS



Megan Richardson and Brian Williams Temple. A reception will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 26, at the Union Station in Ogden. An open house will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 27, at The White House in Twin Falls.

ANNIVERSARIES

THE HASKELLS

TWIN FALLS - Mr. and Mrs. Elden J. Haskell of Twin Falls are celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary.

The couple was honored at a private family dinner hosted by their children on Dec. 20.

Haskell and Loraine Biggs were married Dec. 23, 1943, in the Salt Lake Temple in Salt Lake City, Utah.

They raised their family in Burley, where he farmed and then owned the Holiday Motel in Twin Falls for 17 years. She taught school in Shoshone, Burley and Twin Falls. After retirement, the couple served a mission for the LDS Church in Hawaii and then served in the Boise Temple. He worked for eight seasons at the Buzz Langdon



Elden and Loraine Haskell

Visitor Center for the chamber of commerce.

They have three children, Jay (Linda) Haskell of Kaysville, Utah, and Marcia Carlson and Dr. Holly (Jack) Haurcade, both of Boise; 11 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren.

THORNBRUE-RIGBY

MALTA - Angela Thornbrue and Paul Michael Rigby announce their engagement.

Thornbrue is the daughter of Steve and Lori Thornbrue of Salt Lake City, Utah. She will graduate from Idaho State University with a degree in dental hygiene in May.

Rigby is the son of Steve and Ann Rigby of Malta. He will soon complete a bachelor's degree in computer science at ISU. He also served an LDS mission in Knoxville, Tenn.

Both Thornbrue and Rigby have been serving in the senate at ISU.

The wedding is planned for Saturday, Dec. 27, in the Bountiful LDS Temple. A reception to honor the couple will be held that



Paul Rigby and Angela Thornbrue evening following the ceremony in Salt Lake City. A second reception will be held from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 10, at the Malta 2nd LDS Ward building. A dance will follow.

RICHMAN-BATEMAN

KIMBERLY - Burke and Ann Richman of Kimberly announce the engagement of their daughter, Jana Marie Richman, to Isaac Wayne Bateman, son of Richard and Debbie Bateman of Twin Falls.

Richman is a graduate of Kimberly High School. She is attending Boise State University, majoring in education. She is employed by Olive Garden in Boise.

Bateman is a graduate of Twin Falls High School and is attending the College of Southern Idaho, majoring in business. He served an LDS mission in Long Beach, Calif. He is employed by Big 5 in Twin Falls.

The wedding is planned for Friday, Jan. 9, 2004, in the



Isaac Bateman and Jana Richman Bountiful LDS Temple. A reception will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 10, at the Twin Falls LDS building on Elizabeth Boulevard.

THE HILLMANS

TWIN FALLS - Mr. and Mrs. Chet Hillman of Twin Falls will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with family.

Hillman and Glenda Andrews were married Dec. 21, 1953, at the United Methodist Church in Twin Falls.

They have lived in Twin Falls.

He worked at the Idaho State Police from 1959 to 1972. He owned Chet's Holsters until selling the business in 1984 and later retired from Norco Windows.

She was a homemaker and also worked alongside her husband in their business. She currently is working at Magic Valley Regional Medical Center.

They have been active in the



Glenda and Chet Hillman

Methodist Church and Boy Scout programs with their sons.

They have three children, Terry Hillman of Twin Falls, Doug (Karen) Hillman of Idaho Falls and Pam (Gary) Monroe of Filer.

The couple has 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

ANNIVERSARY



Franke and Jack Muldoon

THE MULDOONS

MARSING - Jack and Franke Muldoon are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary.

They were married Dec. 20, 1953, in Nampa. They currently reside in Marsing.

An open house will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 28, at Purple Sage Elementary School, 25709 El Paso Road in Caldwell.

Aries: Your mind is in overdrive

IF DEC. 21 IS YOUR BIRTHDAY ... you are a bold adventurer and a fearless talker; you can be too much to handle at times. You often leap before you look and wind up in situations you did not adequately anticipate. You are over-exciting and ever-changing, and can be counted on to tell the truth as you see it.

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19): Your mind is in overdrive, so be especially careful to pause and think before you leap. You're making important alliances in your career. Try for a quick getaway in order to learn something new.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20): There's a lot of churning inside you today. Be sure to express yourself constructively. Communication could be difficult. Your career becomes lighter and more fun.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Relationships are the focus for the day. Expressing your feelings gets easier as the day progresses. It's a favorable time to make romantic plans.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Concentrate on getting things done today, but try not to get overly serious about it. A promotion may be forthcoming. Someone special moves closer to you, and love is in the air.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Fun and romance are highlighted for dating LEO, while committed lions deepen with their beloved ones. Don't hold back your feelings. Your creativity is flowing, so take advantage of today.

VIROGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Home life can alternate between being nourishing and feeling extremely intense. A chance meeting could turn out to be important later on.

HOROSCOPE

Jeraldine Saunders

Daily tasks flow smoothly. Don't nurse injustices - let them go.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Things happen fast today, so make an effort to stay grounded. Family time is especially sweet. Career may feel heavy, but it is advancing powerfully.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Money issues come to the fore today. In romance matters, watch out for control issues. It's time to say those loving words you've been holding back. Home may finally begin to settle down.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Be cautious in "letting it all hang out" - sometimes that's just too much information. You may be overly pessimistic about money now. You're in a very charming phase, and your heart is on your sleeve.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Behind the scenes is where you're most comfortable today. But romantic possibilities beckon - don't be afraid to get close if the opportunity presents itself.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Make a humanitarian gesture. Dismiss any feelings of alienation; these are mirages. You're adorable and loved today. But watch your words as something may slip and you might be misunderstood.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): Career is the obsession of the day; go for it because it's time to make your mark. But be sure to work with people rather than against them. You could be sensitive and easily irritated.

Keep track of your investments with the Times-News Money pages



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Sunday Crossword

Edited by Wayne Robert Williams
BURNING QUESTION By James E. Buell, Edgewater, Florida

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82 Payoff ID	130 Asparagus units	43 Window part	92 Mesh brokers	113 Spring-side
85 Batted spin?	131 Eyelid woe	44 Tried and	94 Family pot	
87 Palindromic church	132 School near	45 Check	97 Naked to the waist	resorts
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91 Facts	135 Windoor	48 Splits apart	100 Letters on	116 Wind
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Barking dog meets match in 'Jingle Bells' broadcast



DEAR ABBY: Oh, what a wonderful time of year! The air is filled with Christmas songs - from "White Christmas" by Bing Crosby to "Jingle Bells" by the Barking Dogs.

In my neighborhood, we've had a problem with one neighbor's dog barking all night. Several of us tried to ask the owner to please do something about it. Our pleas fell on deaf ears.

We tolerated it until recently. After hearing "Jingle Bells" by the Barking Dogs, four of us neighbors had an idea. During our weekly card game, I made the comment, "If I had an outside sound system, I'd play the Barking Dogs' 'Jingle Bells' each night when the dog barks." I was making a joke, but my card buddies took me up on it. "Rick" has an outdoor speaker, "Barney" has an old PA system, "Art" volunteered to set it up, and I was to get the record or tape of "Jingle Bells."

Three days later, everything was set up and ready. When the dog started its barking around 1 a.m., I reached over, turned on the PA system and played "Jingle Bells." The dog shut up! Two hours later, the barking resumed. Again I turned on the PA system. I know my neighbors were rolling over laughing as much as I was.

---The next day, I took my daily jog around the neighborhood. The dog owner was outside and I stopped to say hello. He asked me if I had heard the dogs barking "Jingle Bells." I told him, yes, and

I was happy to hear them do it in harmony. Then I added, "I wonder if they'll keep it up during the year - say, New Year's and Easter." He said, "I hope not!"

Needless to say, I took only two more nights before he got the message. Yesterday, when I stopped by his place, he told me he had found a better home for his dog, with a loving child to play with.

Our poker game has the record of the Barking Dogs framed on the wall to remind us of the miracles of Christmas. Wool, wool - and a Merry Christmas to you and yours.

- SANTA'S HELPERS IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR SANTA'S HELPERS: Ho! Ho! Ho! I particularly like the fact that there is a happy ending for all concerned, including the dog - and I'll bet your letter stimulates records sales.

P.S. Now that the neighborhood is quiet again, why not send the former dog owner a CD of "Silent Night"?

DEAR ABBY: My wife, "Claudine," and I have been married for 25 years, and two of our

Write to Abby
Send letters to Dear Abby, Universal Press Syndicate, P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, Calif. 90069, or via her Web site at <http://www.DearAbby.com>

four children still live at home with us. In the past, Claudine has complained to me that I am not very romantic. She said that romance needs to start way before we close the bedroom door. In the last year, she has stopped saying anything about this to me, but our love life has been affected.

I hold Claudine's hand when we go places and I always kiss her before I leave for work. What more can I do to get her interested in me again?

- WANTS MORE IN SANTA ANA, CALIF.

DEAR WANTS: There is more to romance than holding a woman's hand when you go places and kissing her when you leave for work.

Try this: Compliment her on her appearance. Thank her when she does something special for you. Call her just to say "I love you." Take her to a hotel or motel for the weekend so you can be alone. Buy her a little gift or send flowers - "because she's the most beautiful woman in the world." And if that doesn't do it - have her hormones checked.

Dear Abby is written by Jeanne Phillips.

Classic toys still charm children

When searching for children's toys, consider these classics that kids-love, suggested by Mothering magazine:

- Playing cards
- Board games
- Rubber stamps
- Art supplies (eraser, crayons, paints, markers, etc.)
- Wagon
- Puppets
- Modeling clay
- Dress-up clothes
- Flashlight
- Tea set
- Play food
- Paper dolls

Family news you can use

Hold the baby
Infants held by a parent and given a bottle or pacifier during multiple immunization shots cried less than infants who were held by a parent. Infants in another group were placed on an exam table to receive their immunizations.

Babies in the first group cried an average of 19 seconds after the first injection, compared with 57.5 seconds for the group that was not held during the shots.

- compiled from wire reports

Twin Falls

Senior Citizens Center

530 Shoshone St. W.
Dinner served from noon to 12:30 p.m. Suggested donation is \$3.50 for seniors. The cost is \$5 for non-seniors under 60 and \$2.50 for children under 12.
Pool room open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Lounge room available for television, puzzles and reading. Bargain Center will be open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Menus:
Monday: Spaghetti, green beans, green salad, French bread, dessert
Tuesday: Christmas dinner: Roast beef and dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, baked beans, rolls, fruit salad, carrots, pie
Wednesday: Cook's choice
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Closed

Activities:
Monday: Quilting, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Tuesday: Blood-pressure checks, 10:11:45 a.m.
Line-dancing, 7 p.m.
Wednesday: Elks card club
Quilting
Foot clinic
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Closed

West End Senior Citizens Inc.

1010 Main St., Buhl
Menus:
Today: Christmas dinner (Tuesday)
Monday: Cook's choice
Tuesday: Meat balls, mashed potatoes and gravy, salad, spinach, muffins, dessert
Wednesday: Fish, potato wedges, cole slaw, corn, bread, dessert
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Closed

Activities:
Monday: Exercise, 10 a.m.
Cards, 6-9 p.m.
Tuesday: Energy assistance, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Quilting, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Crafts, 1-4 p.m.
Wednesday: Exercise, 10 a.m.
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Closed

Filer Senior Haven

222 Main St., Filer
Dinners served at noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Suggested donation: \$3 for seniors. Home-delivered meals are available each mealtime.

Menus:
Tuesday: Christmas dinner: Turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy, peas, jellied cranberry sauce, hot rolls, carrot cake
Thursday: Closed

Ageless Senior Citizens Inc.

310 Main St. N., Kimberly
Thrift store is open Mondays through Fridays, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Menus:
Monday: Hot turkey sandwiches, Jell-O, potato salad, cookies, pudding, coffee, milk
Wednesday: Salad bar, rolls, apricots, coffee, milk
Friday: Closed

Activities:
Monday: Board meeting, 1:30 p.m.
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Closed

Gooding County Senior Citizens Inc.

308 Sunnyside Ave.
All dinners are noon. Suggested donation is \$3 for seniors.

Menus:
Monday: Sweet-and-sour chicken, fried rice, stir-fried vegetables, apricots, muffins, cookies
Tuesday: Cube steak, parsley potatoes, glazed carrots, peaches, French bread, banana pudding
Wednesday: Baked ham, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans with bacon bits, sumi salad, rolls, pumpkin squares.
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Closed

SENIOR CALENDAR

my call ahead at 764-2226. Center closed until Jan. 4.

Richfield Senior Center

Menus:
Monday: Orange juice, baked turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, stuffing, five-way mixed vegetables, cranberry sauce, homemade rolls, milk, coffee
Thursday: Closed

Shoshone Senior Center

218 N. Rail St. W., Shoshone
Center closed until Jan. 2

Silver and Gold Senior Citizens

203 Wilson, Eden
Suggested donations for seniors is \$3. All meals include salad, dessert, fruit, milk and coffee. Mondays are cookie and bread bake days and Wednesdays are cinnamon roll and maple bar bake days.

Menus:
Tuesday: Potluck
Thursday: Closed

Activities:
Tuesday: Gift exchange

Hagerman Valley Senior/Community Center

140 E. Lake, Hagerman
Open 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Lunch is served at noon and Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Suggested donation is \$3, non-seniors \$4 and children under 12, \$2.

Menus:
Monday: Chicken tetrazzini
Wednesday: Sliced ham
Friday: Closed

Camas County Senior Center

127 E. Willow, Fairfield
Meals are served at noon Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The suggested donation for seniors is \$2.50. Cost is \$3.50 for adults and \$2 for children under 10. All meals are subject to change. To eat a meal at the cen-

Activities:
Monday: Malibu chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, carrots, tossed green salad, fruit and cookies
Tuesday: Lasagna, breadsticks, green beans, Jell-O with fruit, carrot cake
Wednesday: Barbecue ribslets, parsley potatoes, peas and carrots, fruit, butterscotch pudding
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Closed

Activities:
Monday: Aerobics, 11 a.m.
Wednesday: Aerobics, 11 a.m.
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Closed

Activities:
Monday: Quilting, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Tuesday: Christmas dinner: Ham, sweet potatoes, scalloped potatoes and all the trimmings, coconut cake and cranberry Christmas pudding
Wednesday: Closed
Friday: Closed

Blaine County Senior Center

721 Third Ave. S., Hailey
Meals are served at noon on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Milk, juice, coffee and tea are served with all meals.

Menus:
Tuesday: Christmas dinner: Ham, sweet potatoes, scalloped potatoes and all the trimmings, coconut cake and cranberry Christmas pudding
Wednesday: Closed
Friday: Closed

Activities:
Monday: Last-minute Christmas shopping, 9 a.m.
Tuesday: Massage, 10 a.m.
Exercise, 1:30 p.m.
Wednesday: Closed
Thursday: Closed
Saturday: Closed

Golden Heritage Senior Center

2421 Overland, Burley
Menus:
Monday: Sausage gravy, biscuits, mixed vegetables, apricots, ice cream
Tuesday: Chili, cinnamon rolls, peach Jell-O, peas and carrots, tapioca pudding
Wednesday: Christmas dinner
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Closed

Activities:
Monday: Pool, 10 a.m.
Exercise, 11:15 a.m.
Pinocle, 1 p.m.
Tuesday: Pool, 10 a.m.
Dominoes, 10 a.m.
Exercise, 11 a.m.
Bingo, 7 p.m.
Wednesday: Pool, 10 a.m.
Exercise, 11:15 a.m.
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Closed

Minidoka County Senior Citizens Center

702 11th St., Rupert
Meals are served at noon and home delivered upon request. Juice and assorted beverages are served every day with meals.

Menus:
Monday: Assorted salad, cream of chicken soup, grilled-cheese sandwiches, cherry pie
Tuesday: Colelaw, hamburger

Red Lion ParkCenter Suites

"Stay and Play" ski package!
\$110 includes one night's lodging & 2 Bogus Basin ski passes.

Our 237-suite hotel is minutes from downtown Boise, local restaurants, Boise State University and offers convenient access to I-84. Each suite is appointed with one king or two double beds, a microwave oven, refrigerator, coffee maker and toaster, a double sofa sleeper, and a 26" remote control television. Included is a complimentary, deluxe continental breakfast and cookies in the evening.

Call 208-342-1044 to book now!

Know the score? Read The Times-News sports pages to see how your favorite team is doing.

COMMUNITY

Community Editor: Pat Marzantonia - 735-3288

Page E-4

Sunday, December 21, 2003

The Times-News

New Magic Valley Symphony officers are, from left, Carma Smith, secretary; Dorothy Miller, vice president; Jennifir Mindock, president; and Opal Manning, treasurer.



Photo courtesy of BOB WILSON

Magic Valley Symphony elects officers

TWIN FALLS - The Magic Valley Symphony League has announced the election of officers who will preside over the league throughout the 2003-2004 symphony season.

The Magic Valley Symphony League is an informal organization that strives to help carry out many of the symphony's activities.

The league works on ticket sales, ushering, scholarships for young people, stage decorations, poster distribution, hosting guest artists, receptions and other activities.

The league holds no more than one fund-raiser each year. That annual event is a community card party benefit, which has been

held for 10 consecutive years. Arrangements are being made to conduct a small casual style show this year in addition to the customary card playing competition.

Visitors are welcomed at league meetings. The dues are \$10 per year payable in October. For more information, call Jennifir at 733-2013.

HELPING A MUSEUM

The Kiwanis Club of Burley donated \$250 towards the Cassia County Museum's project of a paved parking area on the east side of the museum. From left are Kerry Morrison, Kiwanis president elect; Valarie Bowen, museum volunteer; Dennis Dexter, Kiwanis president; and Joy Tracy, museum volunteer.



Photo courtesy of CARY BRISTOL

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Twin Falls woman celebrates birthday

TWIN FALLS - A birthday open house will be held for Myrtle Harming of Twin Falls from 2-4 p.m. Saturday to celebrate her 90th birthday.

The open house will be held at the Kimberly Church of the Nazarene located on Polk Street.

The family requests no gifts.

Idaho Motorcycle Club sponsors Polar Bear Ride

TWIN FALLS - The Idaho Motorcycle Club Polar Bear Ride will be held Dec. 28.

Riders will meet at 11 a.m. at B & T Truck Driving School, 1300 Kimberly Road in Twin Falls. The

ride starts at noon sharp.

If the roads are not motorcycle friendly, the riders will take cars. The fee is one stuffed animal or \$5 per person. The fee includes a ride pin and lunch. All stuffed animals will be donated to the Jerome City Fire Department.

For more information, call Jerry Morton at 423-5214, Art Fairbanks at 324-4695 or Bob Blair at 733-6863.

FOCUS ON PEOPLE

Jerome students is named to college dean's list

Jessica Jo Allen of Jerome, a second trimester student in the doctor of chiropractic program at the Palmer College of Chiropractic, Davenport, Iowa, has been named to the college's dean's list for the first trimester.

To be eligible, a student must achieve a minimum grade point average of 3.5 in all studies for the respective term.

Eldredge is inducted into honor society at college

Cody D. Eldredge, a graduate from Twin Falls High School, has been inducted into the Irving Bachelor Society, the English department honorary society at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York. He is a junior.

Students accepted for membership in the society must have either completed four English courses and maintained a 3.5 grade point average in English, or completed six English courses with at least a 3.25 grade-point average in English and a 3.0 overall grade point average.

His parents are Terry Eldredge

and Becky Eldredge, both of Boise and formerly of Twin Falls.

Germann graduates with honors from institute

Tyson Germann will graduate with honors in January from Phoenix Technical Institute in Phoenix, Ariz.



Tyson Germann

He has been chosen to attend school with Mercedes Benz in Illinois for four months and then work for the company.

Germann is a 2002 graduate of Burley High School. He attended the Cassia Regional Technical Center in Burley for three years.

He is the son of Brent and Julie Germann of Burley.

Former Burley resident garners Provo-Orem award

Thirteen people and companies were honored for their outstanding examples and contributions to

Utah Valley in the 25th annual Arthur V. Watkins Awards presented by the Provo-Orem, Utah Chamber of Commerce.

Among those honored was Linda Norton Campbell, a graduate of Burley High School and Brigham Young University, who received the community service award. She has had a 25-year involvement with the Parent Teacher Association, served 12 years on the Alpine School Board, taught physical education and health in the Provo School District, and organized the district's first Key Club, which was chosen as the most outstanding youth service organization for the Western Region.

She also has held positions on the Utah School Board of Trustees. She was named the Outstanding Secondary PTA President for Utah, received the National PTA Child Advocacy Award, and served on the Sharon's Cultural, Educational and Recreational Association Board of Trustees and as house manager for its Theatre and Outdoor Shell; and Citizen of the Quarter by Orem City.

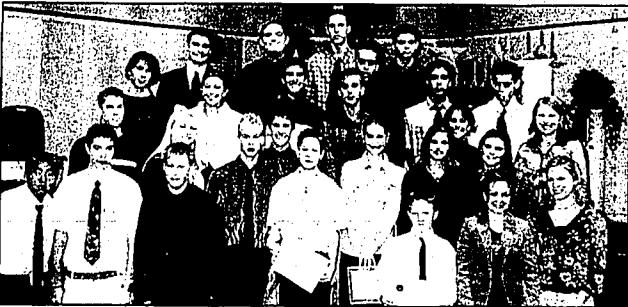
She is the daughter of Vera and Don Norton, formerly of Burley.

HONOR STUDENTS



Photo courtesy of Magic Valley Christian School

Magic Valley Christian School in Twin Falls announced its honor roll students. Students on the superintendent's honor roll earned a 4.0 grade point average. The students are Heidi Aardema, Kaitlin Jacobson, Tim Ahn, Jonathon Jarvis, Elizabeth Allen, Cynthia Lincoln, Cydney Barrette, Jodi Lund, James Boer, Tara Paulson, Seong-Pil Cho, Kayleigh Reltama, Kylie Culbertson, Naomi Sullivan, Tawnye Olibert, Emma Weirama and Angio Hagman.



Academic-honor-roll students earned a 3.5 grade-point average with no grade lower than a C. They are Emma Aardema, Michael Allen, Kara Boer, Krieta Boer, Josa Dealtra, Zach DeKuyf, Ashley Farraine-Vanderstelt, Daniel Heller, Jesse Hoerner, Kamrud Jacobson, James Jarvis, Jordan Jarvis, Holan Kootstra, Anthony Madrid, Todd Mellon, Toris Olson-Brace, HaeChan Park, Cory Paulson, Rachelle Paulson, Joshua Rinard, Michelle Rinard, Julianna Roeloffs, Sara Roeloffs, Jeffrey Sweet, Davis Tyrell, Robbin Tyrell, Jeremy Vanden Bosch, Kyle Vanderstelt, Jessica Whitmire and Travis Wiersma.



Merit honor roll students earned a 3.0 grade point average with no grade lower than a C. The students are Eric Aardema, Evan Aardema, Jordan Aardema, Justin Cox, Billy Edwards, Danise Gaislawyk, Cody Griffith, Tiffany Halbleich, Anni Mellon, Ashlee Melni, Nick Proost, Drew Reltama, Peter Vanden Bosch, Branden Van Esch and Jeffrey Vedder.

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE



TRISA TESHA/The Times-News

Linda Peterson of the Mini-Cassia Child Protection Team and Laurie Simpson, school nurse for Minidoka County, teach students at Hayden Elementary about child abuse with puppets. The puppets 'talk' to each other as children would, talk to each other and relate abusive experiences and how they got help. The presentation talked about physical and sexual abuse, explaining the difference between spanking and abuse and good and bad touches. Children were invited to ask the puppets' questions following the presentation. Second-grade students throughout Minidoka County have the presentation annually.

SERVICE NEWS

May completes 12 weeks of Marine training

Marine Corps Pfc. Justin B. May, son of Mark May of Rupert, has completed 12 weeks of basic training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego,

Calif., which is designed to challenge new Marine recruits both physically and mentally.

In addition to the physical conditioning program, May spent numerous hours in classroom and field assignments, which included learning first aid, uniform regula-

tions, combat water survival, marksmanship, hand-to-hand combat and assorted weapons training. They performed close order drill and operated as a small infantry unit during field training. May is a 2003 graduate of Centennial High School of Boise.

Garcia finishes up weeks of training at Marine depot

Marine Corps Pvt. Roy D. Garcia, son of Vuanda J. and Roberto Garcia of Burley, has completed 12 weeks of basic training at the Marine Corps Recruit

Depot in San Diego, Calif., which is designed to challenge new Marine recruits both physically and mentally. In addition to the physical conditioning program, Garcia spent numerous hours in classroom and field assignments, which included learning first aid,

uniform regulations, combat water survival, marksmanship, hand-to-hand combat and assorted weapons training. They performed close order drill and operated as a small infantry unit during field training. Garcia is a 2003 graduate of Burley High School.

It's a whole new virtual ballgame

The Washington Post

When Aaron Holbert gets home after a stressful workday, he likes to relax playing out gridiron fantasies on his favorite football game this season. But before he gets to the coin toss, the real estate lawyer stops by his virtual office to take care of business.

See, in ESPN NFL Football 2K4, Holbert is not only the coach of the Dallas Cowboys, choosing the plays and substituting players, he's also the general manager, signing and releasing players, negotiating contracts and setting team strategy.

"You want it to be as realistic as real life," says Holbert, 26, of Columbia, Md., who has played sports video games for 12 years. "You want the whole process—you take a team, you are the owner of the team, you are the GM, the coach, the manager, the scout."

Many video-gamers aren't satisfied anymore snagging miracle catches as Redskins receiver Laveranues Coles. Now they want to run the team, too.

Playing Sega's hit game ESPN NFL Football 2K4, for instance, you've got to be smart in the general manager role, because if you let a high-profile free agent sit too long, another team will sign him. Front-office transactions are governed by actual NFL rules, including trade deadlines and salary caps. And, as general manager, not only do you receive scouting reports on players and upcoming opponents and injury reports on your big stars, you also receive the game's virtual e-mail system, you'll also hear "nice job" from the team owner congratulating you on a big win or expressing disappointment over a bad loss.

World Series Baseball 2K3, released last February, allows gamers to draft players, set lineups, make trades, manage the disabled list, call up minor leaguers and hire coaches and scouting staffs. And, true to life, the more successful your team is, the bigger

the budget you get for signing free agents.

EA Sports's NBA Live 2004 lets gamers recruit free agents and draft top college players to build dynasty teams; and ESPN College Hoops 2K4 this year added a virtual e-mail system to communicate with prospects, recruit them and invite them to visit campus.

ESPN's NBA Basketball 2K4's franchise mode enables gamers to hire scouts and assistant coaches, make trades and, in its innovative 24/7 mode, develop a player in real-time practices from street skills to NBA fame.

What has raised the stakes ever more this year is Madden NFL 2004.

Video-gaming's most legendary sports game has introduced the "owner mode," in which players can now tackle the tasks of owning an NFL franchise—from setting ticket prices to building stadiums. And if fan support falters, they can

even relocate the team—an option that required Madden's designers to build in a database about North American cities ripe for relocation.

"We give you the same starting point that Steve Spurrier and Dan Snyder have in Washington," says Jeremy Strauser, producer of EA Sports's Madden NFL series since 1996.

Game makers are expected to emulate, even try to top, Madden NFL 2004's groundbreaking owner mode in their football and other sport titles next year, just as new management features have spread to most sports games since the mid-'90s, when multi-season franchises and college dynasties were the new thing.

Sales of console sports video games (19.5 percent) rank second only to action games (25.1 percent), according to the Entertainment Software Association. Last year's Madden NFL 2003 was the third-best-selling console video game, behind two Grand Theft Auto titles. The latest version sold more than 2 million in its first three weeks on the market and was recently named "Game of the Year" on the 2003 "Video Games Awards" hosted by Spike TV.

Many video-gamers aren't satisfied anymore snagging miracle catches as Redskins receiver Laveranues Coles. Now they want to run the team, too.

Tests can provide early kidney damage warning

When you take your pet to the vet for vaccinations or a routine checkup, your veterinarian may ask to do a diagnostic test such as a urinalysis or blood screening. Pet parents sometimes find it hard to understand why it's necessary to do tests on an animal who outwardly seems quite normal and in good health.

However, as the example below illustrates, sometimes routine laboratory work can find problems long before they are serious, and in doing so save lives.

The kidneys are one of your pet's most complex and important internal organs. Not only do they filter out harmful wastes, but they also produce vital hormones, help generate red blood cells and regulate a wide range of substances critical to life and health.

Given the kidney's many roles, problems with the organ can serve as an early warning for a range of canine and feline diseases. Unfortunately, symptoms of kidney disease typically do not appear for months or even years. That means diagnosis and treatment of the underlying condition often comes too late.

But now new tests are available for both cats and dogs that can catch kidney problems and the diseases that cause them much earlier. Among these tests is the E.R.D. HealthScreen, developed by Heskia Corp. This simple urine test reveals the presence of a key protein that can be a red flag for kidney damage.

In a healthy animal, the albumin protein provides important transport and regulatory functions in the blood stream. Its presence in urine, even in extremely small amounts (called microalbuminuria or MA) indicates that the protein has leaked past the kidney and that the organ's selective filtering mechanism is breaking down.

This leakage can be caused by high blood pressure, dental problems and numerous other infectious, metabolic and inflammatory diseases, including heartworm disease, diabetes and inflammatory bowel disease. Veterinarians say the accuracy, simplicity and speed of the new urine tests mark a breakthrough in early disease detection.

This new test has been a very valuable addition to our canine annual health exam," says Calvin Clements, a veterinarian with Palmyra Animal Clinic in Palmyra, Pa. "It fits seamlessly into our current wellness program. The test is quick and easy for the staff to use, and has allowed us to detect, treat and manage underlying disease conditions that may have gone undetected."

Kidney problems are widespread in both cats and dogs. In a recent study, almost 25 percent of 3,041 veterinary clinic staff-owned dogs at more than 350 clinics tested positive for microalbuminuria. In another study involving more than 1,200 cats, approximately 25 percent were found to have undetected kidney damage. Of the 611 apparently healthy cats, 13.7 percent tested positive.

Notably, the prevalence of positive test results in healthy cats increased dramatically with age.



THE BOND Marty Becker

Persians: The world's most popular pedigree cats called the "coach potatoes" of the feline world, one breed makes up 60 percent of the pedigree cats born each year.

The Persian is the world's most popular pedigree cat breed, including the Himalayan which most registries include as the Siamese-colored variety of Persian, and the Exotic which is the short-haired variety, this group makes up 6 out of 10 of the pedigree cats born each year in the United States.

The Persian Longhair are extremely placid and affectionate and typically get along very well with kids, cats, even dogs. Its long coat requires a lot of grooming. The Exotic or short-haired Persian is for those folks who like the look and sweet temperament of a Persian without all the hair. Besides the obvious difference in hair length, Exotics are more active than their long-haired "coach potato" sisters, but they don't dive bomb the drapes or zoom around the room like the more hyperkinetic cat breeds.

For example, 35.6 percent of healthy cats 12 to 15 years old tested positive and 72.7 percent of cats greater than 16 years old tested positive.

"Many underlying feline diseases go undetected in a physical exam," says veterinarian Wayne Jenson, Heskia's senior director of diagnostic research. "This test gives practicing veterinarians an inexpensive way to routinely test cats to assess their current health status, alert them to identify and treat potential disease conditions causing renal damage, and help pets live longer, healthier lives by discovering and treating disease earlier than ever before."

For humans, a yearly physical to screen for possible disease conditions is important. It is doubly so for our pets, since they age faster than we do. So be sure to have your animal tested early for kidney problems. Catching a disease early can make a world of difference.

I realize that vets, not a pet's Mom or Dad, order diagnostic tests on pets. But I feel so strongly about the benefit of these early warning screens for kidney problems, that I encourage you "pet parents" to call your vet immediately and ask them if tests like the E.R.D. HealthScreen should be run on your beloved pets.

Former Twin Falls veterinarian Marty Becker is the coauthor of the new book "Chicken Soup For The Horse Lover's Soul" and a popular veterinary contributor for ABC's "Good Morning America." Write to him in care of Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service, 790 National Press Building, Washington, D.C. 20045.

Help four-year-old learn to converse better

Q: My 4-year-old daughter frequently repeats things she's heard or said before. She seems to have a hard time coming up with something new to say. For example, when I moved my brother and his family though nearly two years ago, whenever we drive by their old house, my daughter will say, "There's Uncle Bob's house!" She also asks questions to which she knows the answers. If I am wearing a blue shirt, she might ask, "Is your shirt blue, Mommy?" She knows her colors, by the way. Lately, when she asks a question of this sort, I've been asking her, "What do you think?" I'm not trying to intimidate, I'm just trying to get her to figure it out on her own, but she immediately becomes quiet, like she's trying to figure out what I want her to say. She's very bright for her age, but I'm beginning to think there may be something wrong here. In one case, her habits are beginning to grate on my nerves. What do you think?

A: I think you're making a



PARENTING John Rosemond

mountain out of a molehill. If there is a problem, it would fall into one of three categories: discipline, development or disorder. You're certainly not describing a discipline problem. While I don't have enough information to be definitive—about the latter—two possibilities, 35 years' experience as a parent, grandparent, and family psychologist therapist give me the confidence to propose that what you're describing is no big deal. Furthermore, it's not unusual for 4-year-olds to do what your daughter is doing.

My sense is she's simply trying to figure out how to begin conversing with people and sounding good. You. During the second and third years of life, a child figures out the

fundamentals of language and begins making sentences.

A 3-year-old begins using language to describe the world around her, but there are known for "monologues," not conversations. They'll go on and on about seemingly nothing, jumping from topic to topic and obviously uninterested in what anyone else might have to say.

At 4, the art of give-and-take conversation begins to develop. Your daughter is simply trying to figure out how to have interactive exchanges with other people. And yes, a child's first attempts at conversation can be annoying, as can attempts on the part of a toddler to learn words (e.g., the constant "What's that?") and the endless egocentric chatter of a 3-year-old.

I know it takes a lot of patience to respond with more than a "Yep" to your daughter's repetitious statements and seemingly unnecessary questions, but in this case, patience will pay off handsomely for both of you. Help her learn what conversation is—all

about by responding to these "monologues" with a question that causes her to think and draws her into a discussion.

For example, the next time she says "There's Uncle Bob's house!" you can ask, "What's the best memory you have of being at Uncle Bob's?" or "Do you remember where Uncle Bob lives now?" If she asks, "Is your dress blue, Mommy?" you can respond with "Can you name three other things that are blue?"

Talk to your daughter! Teach her how to converse. The more you help her, the quicker she will develop her conversational skills, and the more you'll enjoy talking to her. And she will grate on your nerves no more.

John Rosemond is a family psychologist. Questions of general interest may be sent to him at Affirmative Parenting, 1020 East 86th Street, Suite 26B, Indianapolis, Ind. 46240 and at his Web site: <http://www.rosemond.com/>

"Take it on the lam" originated as underworld slang

DEAR EDITOR: Where did the expression "take it on the lam" originate?

-C.L. SOUTH ORANGE, N.J.
DEAR C.L.: "Take it on the lam," meaning "to run away," originated as criminal and underworld slang before the turn of the 20th century. This passage, written in 1904, gives some of its origin flavor: "He plugged the main guy for keeps and I took it on a lam for me." Though the expression is now used by ordinary folks as well as criminals, it still retains connotations of fleeing, escaping or going into hiding, often from the law. This 1954 quotation from Irene Kuhn is typical of most usage: "I was caught and I went down to the office to collect my dough. That so-and-so of a promoter had taken it on the lam."

The word "lam" was a verb meaning "to beat soundly" ("they lammed him good") when it first entered the English language in 1596, and it was still used in that sense today. The word is of Scandinavian origin, akin to Old English "lama," meaning "lame." In American slang of the late 19th century, the verb developed the sense "to run off," an extension of the literal meaning comparable to the use of "beat" in "beat it." The phrase "take it on the lam" is derived from this verb.

DEAR EDITOR: In English class my teacher has been using the word "decorum." Every time I ask him to explain it to me, he tells me to look it up. When I do, I still do not understand the meaning. Could you please explain the meaning of the word and also where it came from?

-R.J. MADISON, CONN.
DEAR EDITOR: Most of us have had frustrating experience of being told by a well-intentioned teacher to "look it up" when we encountered a difficult word. It sounds as though you've fared better than many: You've at

WORDWATCH Merriam-Webster

least figured out the word's spelling, so you were able to find it in the dictionary.

Very generally, "decorum" is just a fancy way of saying "good manners." If your teacher is asking your class to "maintain decorum" he is requesting that you resist the temptation to, for example, run up and down the halls singing. He would prefer that you sit politely at your desks, paying attention to your lessons instead of talking to your friends and passing notes; that other words, he wants you to behave yourselves.

"Decorum" comes from the Latin word "decorus," an adjective formed from the noun "decor," which in Latin means "beauty, grace." Latin "decorus" also spawned the similar English words "decorous" meaning "marked by politeness and good taste." We first have evidence of "decorum" being used in print in the 16th century, when it referred specifically to a sort of literary and dramatic standard of appropriateness, a guideline for what art and literature should be like. We have long since abandoned the 16th century sense of decorum in our novels and movies, but we do, of course, still retain definite ideas about what polite behavior is.

Wanna have words?

This column was prepared by the editors of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition. Readers may send questions to Merriam-Webster's Wordwatch, PO. Box 281, 47 Federal St., Springfield, Mass. 01102.

DEAR EDITOR: Can you shed some light on the saying "you look like the wreck of the Hesperus"? I am aware of the Longfellow poem. Was there really a shipwreck? Was it in 1840? Where?

-S.N., HARRISBURG, PA.
DEAR S.N.: There was indeed an actual shipwreck that inspired

the Longfellow poem, although it took place in 1837 rather than 1840. In his diary on December 17, 1837, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote, "News of shipwrecks horrible on the coast. Twenty bodies washed ashore near Gloucester, one lashed to a piece of wreck. There is a reef called Norman's Toe where many of these took place; among others the schooner 'Hesperus'." I must write a ballad on this.

In a time when reciting poems was a popular form of entertainment, Longfellow's ballad "The Wreck of the Hesperus" became famous enough to establish the phrase in the popular vocabulary as an exaggerated way of referring to someone or something in a battered or disheveled state.

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Making Twin Falls livable

With the arrival of warm weather in spring 1905, Twin Falls residents were happy to hear that several of the town's stores had ordered handsome soda fountains. It was generally thought, however, that having the fountains would make it "unsafe for a bachelor to walk the streets."

That spring the citizenry also learned that a new town could be a mighty dusty place. It was so bad, said one observer, that the cheapest way for newcomers to acquire a town lot was to "go out on a windy day and rope one." And - if the wind proved strong enough - it might be possible to "round up a section."



TALES OF THE TRACT
James Varley

The need for sprinkling streets was one of the reasons that citizens began agitating to incorporate the new hamlet as a village. In mid-March, with the population standing at over 1,000 souls and lots selling briskly, a meeting was held in the little schoolhouse - building - and the idea of incorporation approved.

Cassia County commissioners were petitioned and, on April 13, they designated Twin Falls as a village. Appointed as trustees (councilmen) were F.W. Eichhoff, a hack line operator; Paul Bickel, a civil engineer; Samuel Hamilton, an attorney; Frank Bradley, a grocer; and Robert McCollum, a real estate salesman. The commissioners also appointed a deputy sheriff and two justices of the peace for the new village.

When the board of trustees organized a few days later, Bickel was elected as Twin Falls' first mayor. One of the board's first acts was to designate Albert Snodgrass as city marshal and task him with quelling the all too frequent "reckless shooting" of firearms in town.

In a flurry of activity over the next few days 18 ordinances were produced. To raise money, license fees were set for a variety of businesses and activities. An annual "road tax" was mandated, requiring every able-bodied citizen between 21 and 50 years of age to either pay \$4 or perform two days' labor on the streets.

Gambling was banned, saloons regulated and "obscene ... and indecent" activities proscribed - such things as using profane language in public places, and keeping a house where "lewd and disorderly persons" assembled together for dancing. It was also forbidden to give or sell tobacco to anyone under age 21.

Other new rules dealt with the "furious or reckless driving" of carriages, leaving horses standing untied in the streets, and the removal of dead animals and refuse.

Our forebears weren't terribly sensitive to the plight of the



Twin Falls' Main Avenue in March 1905.

homeless. While there was some assistance given to indigents - including medical attention - a great animosity existed toward the numerous drifters that inhabited every town in those days, and who were known variously as tramps, hobos or "Weary Willies."

In the same year Twin Falls was founded, a mob of Mountain Home men horsewhipped, tarred and feathered, and carried two such drifters out of town on a rail. The councilmen of Twin Falls contented themselves with issuing an ordinance calling for a \$100 fine for such "idle or dissolute persons" who were physically able to work, but who had no visible means of living.

Over the next few months, franchises were granted for telephone service and a waterworks. And, with the help of the Twin Falls Land and Water Co., several street-sprinklers were obtained to keep the streets settled. Streets were graded (but not paved) and crosswalks of stone or gravel were made. To accommodate heavy traffic from the south of town, a bridge was built over Rock Creek at the end of Shoshone Street. The trustees made it unlawful to drive across this "New Bridge" at a gait faster than a walk, or to drive more than 10 head of stock over it at a time. A later version of this span would be known as the "Singing Bridge."

Perhaps the trustees' greatest challenge was in getting an adequate sewer system installed. In the beginning there were only cesspools - pits dug in the ground - to collect sewage from homes and businesses.

When the trustees proposed a bond issue to build a regular sewer system, there was strong opposition because of the cost. This led the *Twin Falls News* to point out that the odor of the existing cesspools would frighten way more new residents and investors in an instant than would the proposed sewer tax in a decade. The editor posed the question: "Shall Twin Falls be a modern, sanitary city, or must it stink and shine ... like a rotten mackerel in the moonlight?"

The bond issue ultimately passed, in September 1906, and

The Rink

One of the businesses boasting a soda fountain was "Billy's Place," also known as "Billy's Lunch Room," which was opened as a short-order restaurant in February 1905 by William A. Ring. It sat next to the Twin Falls Rooming House on Main Avenue East. Early on, Ring and a partner bought the cigar-business-next-door and combined the two buildings to make a 24-by-97 roller skating rink.

The "Rink," or "Ring Theatre," became the most popular gathering place in town, hosting skating parties, dances, public meetings, lectures and concerts. Plays produced there - like "Peck's Bad Boy," "Old Maids' Convention" and "Shall We Forgive Her?" - were particularly popular, as were vaudeville and burlesque shows like the Kempton Komecky Kompany.

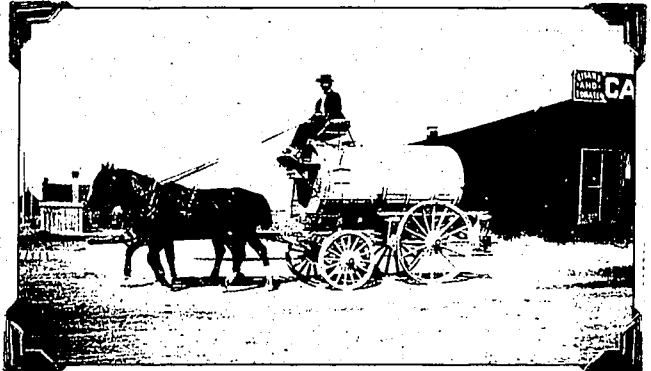
How it became "magic"

The first time the adjective "magic" appeared in print to describe our town or area seems to have been when the *Twin Falls News* dubbed the town "magic city" in its April 20, 1906, edition. Members of the Eastern Idaho Press Club, meeting here, used the same term in December of that year.

In August 1907, a writer for *Outdoor Life* magazine noted that the road from I.B. Perrine's ferry connected directly with the main boulevard of Twin Falls, "that Magic City on the sand."

after much wrangling over rights of way the main trunk lines were completed in July of the following year. The effluent was discharged into Rock Creek where, it was argued, in the rapid stream it "would scarcely be noticed." This state of affairs continued until 1967, when a modern sewage treatment plant was built.

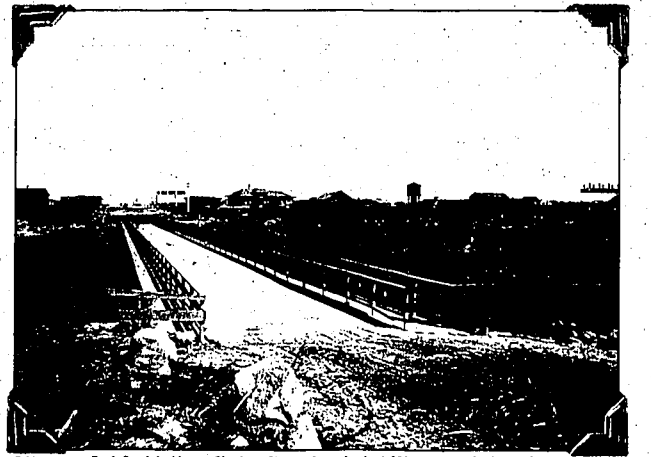
James Varley's newspaper columns will be collected in a book titled "Tales of the Tract: The Beginnings of Twin Falls, Idaho and the 'Magic Valley,'" to be released May 1.



Sprinkling a Twin Falls street, in about 1905.



Another view of Main Avenue in about 1906; note board sidewalks.



Bridge across Rock Creek looking up Shoshone Street, shown in about 1906; depot in background.

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